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NEW LETTERS OF THOMAS CARLYLE VOL. I

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NEW LETTERS AND MEMORIALS OF JANE WELSH CARLYLE. Demy 8vo

and

THE NEMESIS OF FROUDE

THOMAS CARLYLE,
From the Portrait by
Mr. J. McN. Whistler, 1877.

NEW LETTERS OF THOMAS CARLYLE

EDITED AND ANNOTATED BY ALEXANDER CARLYLE WITH ILLUSTRATIONS VOLUME I

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ILLUSTRATIONS.

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PREFACE

This Selection from Carlyle's Correspondence is a sequel to the "Letters of Thomas Carlyle," published some years ago under the editorship of Professor Charles Eliot Norton, and brings to a completion the "Epistolary autobiography" begun by the publication of the "Early Letters."

The New Letters have been chosen from an immense number now in my possession, or placed at my disposal by the kindness of the owners; and the two principal objects aimed at in making the Selection, have been, first, to present only the best and most characteristic examples of Carlyle's Letters; and, secondly, to arrange these, with occasional extracts from other Letters which are not of sufficient importance for publication in full, so that when read in connection with his "Reminiscences" and his Notes and Introductions to the "Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle," the whole might serve as an autobiography or picture of his life, self-drawn and therefore indisputably true and faithful in outline, and complete enough in detail for all legitimate purposes. As no Life of Carlyle, satisfactory to those who knew him intimately, has yet appeared, the autobiography which he has thus unconsciously traced in his Letters and Annotations is of more than usual value and importance in elucidating his character and conduct and in explaining the conditions and circumstances under which he lived and worked.

Carlyle's Letters are generally the unpremeditated, spontaneous expressions of his thoughts and feelings at the moment of writing, set down with perfect candour and sincerity, in his most rapid, fluent style; there are characteristic touches of his genius in nearly every one of them, even in his briefest Notes; whilst many of them are equal in literary qualities to the best of his published writings. Yet they reveal withal the heart of their writer perhaps more than his genius; they bear evidence that the man who wrote them was not only sincere and candid, but also kindly disposed, full of sympathy and active helpfulness, ever ready with wise advice, friendly encouragement and practical beneficence to all those with whom he was brought in contact. Amongst Carlyle's correspondents, outside his own family, are representatives of almost every class of society; some of his Letters are addressed to working-men, others to men who were, or have since become, eminent in Literature, Science or Art; and in each and every case his well considered counsel, kindly encouragement and practical help are fully and freely tendered. To no honest enquirer after truth or seeker of advice, did Carlyle turn a deaf ear; during the greater part of his life, busy or not busy, he seems to have answered every correspondent whether known to him or not.

The majority of the Letters of this Selection are addressed to members of his Family,—his Mother, his Wife, his Brothers Alexander and John (Dr. Carlyle), and his Sister Mrs. Aitken. These "familiar Letters" have been more largely drawn upon than the others, because they contain fuller autobiographical details, more intimate and confidential disclosure of the heart and feelings of their writer, and his more private observations upon contemporary men and events.

But in addition to the Family Letters, these volumes are enriched by a very considerable number of deeply interesting Letters addressed to men and women in almost every rank in life, who were not relatives but only friends or acquaintances, or, it may be, merely unknown correspondents. Of this class of Letters, those written to his eminent contemporaries in the field of literature are perhaps the most important, as they certainly are, from a literary point of view, the most generally interesting. Here will be found the choicest examples of Carlyle's Letters to John Sterling, Robert Browning, J. G. Lockhart, Edward FitzGerald, Leigh Hunt, John Forster, and other well-known literary men. These Letters, with the replies to them (which are also preserved), show very conclusively that Carlyle himself was, what he has described John Sterling as being, *ein gar brüderlicher Mann* (a very brotherly man); and also that he was in turn esteemed and loved as such by those who knew him most intimately and were best capable of judging him truly.

I have included a large number of Letters which were written in the lonesome years after Mrs. Carlyle's death, because, although they are as a rule perhaps of less literary merit than those of earlier date, they will, it is believed, serve to remove many prevalent misconceptions regarding Carlyle's condition during these later years,—the part of his life that has been the most seriously misunderstood or misrepresented. The mythical story that he spent his last years in penitential sorrow and remorse (for the supposed ill-treatment of his Wife) is not one that can be credited by those who were intimate with him, or who have read his correspondence, during the period referred to. It rests on idle gossip and hearsay, or on certain humour-

ously exaggerated expressions in Mrs. Carlyle's Letters, or on mistaken inferences from isolated extracts from Carlyle's Journal which when read in its entirety and with a knowledge of the circumstances under which it was written, affords little or no evidence in justification of the allegation. The Journal for these years has been not inaptly described as being "mainly a record of his sorrows"; he rarely wrote in it, I have been told by One who lived with him for the last thirteen years of his life, except when he was suffering from a fit of special ill-health, sleeplessness and consequent despondency. When he was fairly well and in good spirits, day after day would go pleasantly past, and the Journal be allowed to lie unopened; but after a restless night, a spell of insomnia, dyspepsia, or hypochondria, the unfortunate Diary was certain to be produced and an entry made in it symptomatic of his feelings at the moment. The Journal even as a whole gives a one-sided and far too sombre a view of his condition, and it is peculiarly liable to misinterpretation or misconstruction, especially when extracts, chosen for a purpose and detached from the context, are alone read. With his Letters, on the other hand, the circumstances were different; he generally wrote these on "well-days," under normal conditions, and in them his prevailing moods of mind and feeling are much more truly represented. They afford unquestionable evidence that he bore his sufferings, sorrows and losses with a fair share of cheerfulness, patience, dignity, pious resignation, and submission to the inevitable. Take as an example this extract from a Letter written in the beginning of 1870, in reference to the loss of his Wife, which was naturally a crown of sorrow to him in his loneliness and broken-down condition: "Since April gone three years, I feel at all hours left entirely

solitary; no joy or cheerful promise of a social heart's communion in this world now possible. Nevertheless be complaint far from us. A noble sorrow there, is or can be, a blessedness too. I am far sadder and gloomier of mind than I used to be; but ought not to say I am to be called unhappy,—on the contrary rather."

The increase of his sadness and gloominess of mind began before the death of his Wife; and the causes of it are not far to seek; he was entering the solemn valley of old-age; his health and strength were completely broken by long years of wearing toil and trouble; in 1865 (more than a year before Mrs. Carlyle died), he emerged from his last herculean task, the "Life of Friedrich," in a state which he himself describes as one of "gloomy *collapse* of mind and body," of being "often enough low and dreary, truly helpless, weak as a sparrow, liver and nerves deeply wrong." And it was while still suffering under this collapse, that the great calamity of his life befell him, his loving, true-hearted and dearly loved Life-companion was suddenly snatched away from him, to be followed year after year by other losses, until as usually happens to those whose span of life has exceeded the three score years and ten, all his early and intimate friends had gone before him. Here are the names of a few of the friends and relatives whose loss he survived to mourn: Joseph Neuberg, John Chorley, Thomas Erskine, Mr. Foxton, his half-brother John Carlyle, John Stuart Mill, Edward Twisleton, John Forster, his Brother Alexander, David Laing, and his Brother Dr. Carlyle. No wonder that Carlyle felt lonely in these later years, and wrote pathetically, "The earth grows very solitary when all our loved ones are faded away to the Unseen Land!"

I have only to add that this Selection was begun by Professor Norton, some years ago, and provisionally completed down to 1866. The Letters of later date are all of my choosing. In order, however, to bring the whole Collection into the compass of two volumes (for bibliopolic reasons), it has been found necessary to omit many Letters and extracts from Letters which Professor Norton had chosen for publication, and in general to adopt a process of abbreviation wherever that could be effected with the least detriment to the narrative; while, on the other hand, some Letters recently found have been added. I had hoped and expected that Professor Norton would undertake the editorship of these volumes, or at least write an Introduction to them; but in this I have, unfortunately for myself and my readers, been disappointed. The venerable Professor is now in his seventy-seventh year.

Carlyle was a prolific Letter-writer, and there has been no lack of Letters to choose from in almost any of the years of his active life. The only exception to this occurs in the period from 1856 to 1865, when he was engaged in writing his "Frederick the Great," and was nearly overwhelmed by the difficulty and magnitude of the labour which this task involved. Of some of these years the Letters are reduced to hasty and brief Notes; and few of these have been selected. In the year 1878, too, there is a scarcity of Letters. Dr. Carlyle was then his chief, almost only correspondent; and he and Carlyle were living together, or within easy reach of each other, at Chelsea or Dumfries, for the greater part of the year.

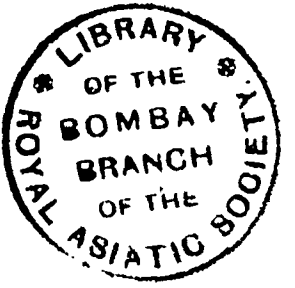
The Letters of this Collection, the great majority of which are now published for the first time, are arranged in chronological order, and form a fairly well-connected and consecutive

narrative; so that connecting-links or editorial introductions to individual Letters, which would have occupied space to the exclusion of more valuable material, have not been considered necessary. Controversial topics have been avoided; the Selection, with the exception of one or two Letters, was completed years ago, and has been in type since April last.

A. CARLYLE

EDINBURGH, December, 1903

NEW LETTERS OF THOMAS CARLYLE VOL. I



NEW LETTERS OF THOMAS CARLYLE

LETTER 1

To the Rev. John Sterling, 5 Orme Square, Bayswater.

Chelsea, Saturday Morning, [26 March, 1836].

My dear Sterling—If it will not hurt you to write, pray send me a little Bulletin with your own hand. I hear nothing but more or less contradictory accounts, the average of which is a vague *statu-quo*. Your Doctors undoubtedly have done well to seclude you; this I must say, tho' I suffer by it like others. If at any hour it become medically permissible for you to be talked to, pray send me word.

But above all things, *mein Lieber*, get fast well again. We miss you terribly; it is many long years since I in particular saw a face like yours. Courage, *Hoffnung und Ergebung!* [*Hope* and *Submission!*]

"*Die Zukunft decket*
Schmerzen und Glücke.
Schrittweis' dem Blicke,
Doch ungeschrecket
Dringen wir vorwärts." *

* Goethe's *Werke*, iii. 69 (Cotta, Stuttgart und Tübingen, 1827). Carlyle's translation of the verse, as given in *Past and Present* (Bk. iii., chap. xv.) is:

The Future hides in it
Gladness and sorrow;
We press still thorow,
Naught that abides in it
Daunting us,—onward.

I am to be at your Father's to-night, seeking my Wife: the answer to this cannot come by post till Monday. Jane bids me say, "If there were anything in the world she could do! She is the most disengaged woman in London at present." I believe the message is *sincere* to the fullest extent.

God bless you and keep you, my dear Friend!

Yours *brüderlich,*

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 2

To Dr. Carlyle, Post Restante, Brussels.

Chelsea, 31st March, 1836.

My dear Brother— . . . For the present I figure you as hanging in vague Cloudland, as I know nothing specific about the country you travel through: but then will you not alight upon the firm land *here,* on the seventh of the month! As you pass Gravesend (would you were so far!) you may fancy that I was there, on foot, some three weeks ago (tho' I only crossed your road); on what errand I will tell you some leisure day. John Mill was to go, and "get better" (in six and thirty hours) at a place out there; and would not go without me: I went, and was so wretched, with my sickness and with the people (very good people called Hicksons, of the shoemaker profession), that I bundled, on the first morrow, and walked off, making excuses on excuses, and got into the Steamboat again.—Do you remember that this place of ours is pronounced *Chainie* Row; and that Cheyne *Walk,* a more notable Street, to which you may probably enough be driven, is close by. We are "Cheyne

* Dr. Carlyle, now, and for the last five years, travelling physician to Lady Clare.

Row," or Great Cheyne Row; not *Upper* Cheyne Row, which also is at our very hand. The name is on the door; and a brazen No. "5." Come my brave fellow, and knock!

I do not at the moment recollect anything you can do for me at Brussels. There was a Book published (at Paris probably), of which I can give no better account than that it was a "Collection of *Bonmots* uttered by people about to be guillotined": if you pass near any likely Bookseller's Shop, you might step in *once*, and endeavour to ask for it; *one* asking and a few shillings I would give; not more. For, on the whole, it is not Books that I want now; but good sense and good spirits to make use of what I have. Something like three hundred volumes; and I all biliousness and fret, and palpitating haste and bewilderment! For the last five weeks both Jane and I have been worse than usual; owing probably to the changeful weather of this season. I had a sore wrestle with the Chapter* just done the day before yesterday: there are still two, tho' much shorter ones, before this Second Volume ends. Heigho! It seems as if I were enchanted to this sad Book: peace in the world there will be none for me till I have it done. And then very generally it seems the miserablest mooncalf of a Book; full of *Ziererei*, affectation (do what I will); tumbling head foremost through all manner of established rules. And no money to be had for it; and no value that I can count on of any kind: simply the blessedness of being done with it! It comes athwart me like the breath of Heaven that I *shall* verily be done with it in some few months more now. *Then* let it go;

* What Carlyle at this time called "Chapters" he afterwards called "Books," and subdivided these into ordinary chapters. The "Chapter" he had just finished is Book iv, named Varennes. See *French Revolution*, vol. ii.

to be trodden down into the gutters if the poor people like; to be lifted aloft on poles, if they like; to be made a Kirk and Mill of! The indifference that I feel about all mortal things is really very considerable.

I was at a *rout* last night, of Mrs. Austin's, who is over here at this time: notabilities male and female were there; Mr. Lockharts, Economical Seniors, Mrs. Marcets, Mrs. Somervilles, *femmes alors célèbres;* it seemed to me, as I elbowed these people, that, like Curly, I "did not give a *rush* for them, more than for any other men." Glory and disgrace, poverty and wealth, gig-and-eight, or torn shoe-soles, behold Brethren, it is all alike to me; I too have my indefeasible lot and portion in this God's Universe of Vapour and of Substance; and grudge you not and hate you not, rather love you in an underhand manner, and wish you *speed* on your paths! Taylor (*van Artevelde*),* a man whom I grow to esteem more and more for the solid structure of him, for the very *vis inertiæ* he has, and stiff irrefragable English character, took me homewards in his glass-coach, out of that; and I found Cheyne Row glancing under moonlight, swept by moaning breezes; and my Dame and bowl of Annandale porridge within. I saw Rogers (Poet Rogers) a while ago, at dinner with Taylor; a half-frozen old sardonic Whig-Gentleman: no hair at all, but one of the whitest bare scalps, blue eyes, shrewd, sad and cruel; toothless horse-shoe mouth drawn up to the very nose: slow-croaking, sarcastic insight, perfect breeding;—state-rooms where you are welcomed even with flummery; internally a Bluebeard's chamber, where none but the proprietor enters! Or did I tell you all this before? I was at a *rout* at Mrs. Buller's too: Irish Shiel there; and floods of gilt

* Henry Taylor (afterwards Sir Henry).

Radicalism of both sexes: Shiel is a little quick-looking fellow, bushy brows, grizzled hair, a pair of gently beaming brown eyes, and much Irish brogue.—Enough, enough! . . .

Our worst news is the illness of good John Sterling; indeed of both him and Mill. Sterling is of weak lungs, has often suffered almost to death: about three weeks ago, he was struck down; and for the last fortnight none of us sees him. The Doctors (trusting in *stethoscope*) seem to say his lungs are not radically deranged; but of so delicate, irritable a structure that he must give up his preaching profession; and never think of passing another Winter here. They speak of Madeira; of the West Indies, where he has property: I am very sad about it, for I love this man; a radiant, lambent, all-hoping brotherly being, —one of those you call "too good to live." He and Taylor often seem to me very strangely like the two *halves* of Edward Irving, living apart: it is a singular feeling, of sight and remembrance, of sadness and kindliness. My poor Irving is snatched away from me: away, away! . . .

Jane can send you nothing but her love *reported*. Come along and see her and it and us. I have still *two* Chapters of my volume to do: woe is me! But they are short; and I am not going to *pause* this time; for that only does me ill.—In a week, man? It looks so very incredible.—All good be with you, and come prosperously to us, my dear Brother!

Your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 3

To the Rev. John Sterling, Bayswater.

Chelsea, Tuesday, [12 April, 1836].

Thanks my dear Sterling, for your kind message, and confirmation of the good news which I hear daily. This weather will set you up again, if you take care; and we shall meet soon, and many a time, under the stars,—and if God will, *above!* We are in His World, as I understand it; and can hope all things, nay, foresee, all things that are *good for us.*

The *Wahlverwandtschaften* is the only other of Goethe's Novels that you have not read. There is the German *Werther* indeed, and some *Briefe aus der Schweitz* appended to it; but I doubt your appetite.—Have you seen the *Dichtung und Wahrheit?* That is best of all. But I send you the general Catalogue (which pray do not lose, for I can find nothing without it): choose what you will; with my blessing. I know no finer reading in the world at present.

We are what is called "very well"; that is, alive and stirring at some work, in a very bilious state. My Brother John, the Doctor, is expected to-day! I should like well that he saw you, would arrangements permit, some time; if not for your sake, then for my own. He is a fellow of considerable insight, and perfect candour; in whose medicality I am (slowly) gathering a sort of real faith, almost to my own surprise.

. . . . By the bye, Jeffrey has taken Hunt's Pension in hand: may he prosper in it! Mill I find has as yet made small way.

I have been reading Hare's *Guesses at Truth;* really with

great satisfaction. A fresh, robust, light-loving man;—who ought to be a Bishop. I have done with the *Forster;* or can be in few minutes, by *marking* a little: but do not send it yet.

My Wife sends audibly and inaudibly innumerable good-wishes towards you and yours. Good be in your Household,—. and I soon, when you are strong enough!

Ever affectionately,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 4

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 15 May, 1836.

My dear Mother—I am afraid you begin to think us rather negligent: at all events you have good right to be impatient to get some news from us; for since Jack's Letter, announcing hastily nothing or little more than that he was arrived, you have not received the smallest scrape of a pen from us,—if it were not the two strokes * on the back of the Newspaper. It should not have been so. But the matter went as matters often go: I thought Jack would write, having less to do than I; Jack thought probably I would write: and thus, as the old Proverb teaches, "between two stools the unfortunate sitter came to the floor." Whether Jack will write to-day, I cannot tell, tho' I have urged him; but one thing I can tell, that *I* will write. None of us are going to Church, and it seems to me I could not readily find better employment.

The truth is, there was hitherto almost nothing definite to

* By prearrangement the "two strokes" (two short lines generally drawn under the address of the newspaper wrapper) were understood to mean "All well"; and three strokes, "Got your Letter."

be written. Jack has been flying about here as you can fancy him: entirely uncertain this day what he would do the next; speaking about doing all things under the moon and above it; but with no means of forming any positive plan for the future. It is to a good degree the like case with us all. . . .

As to myself, for the last three weeks I have been going what you call *bane*-idle.* I finished my Second Volume then, and determined to have a rest for one week; it was very grand: Jack and I went swashing far and near. . . .

I often think it is a great malady and madness this poor Book of mine, which wears me so, and has been so unlucky: yet rather I should say, it is a great happiness, and gives me the completest indifference towards all fretting of fortune, towards much that has haunted me like pale spectres all my life long. With little in my purse, little in my hope, and no very fixed landmark in this Earth, I stand serene under the sky, and really have the peaceablest fearlessness towards all men and things. Such blessing I owe to the poor Book; and therefore will not abuse it, but speak well of it. In some few months it will be printed and done, and the world all round me once again,—much more homelike than it ever before was. The people are exceedingly good and kind to me, the better and kinder, that I depend little on that, or not at all on it, and could do quite tolerably, with their badness and indifference. . . .

I will not be so long in writing again. Take care of yourself, dear Mother. Jane sends her love to all of you, as we all do.

Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

* Bone-idle—*i. e.*, as idle as an old bone.

LETTER 5

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, Saturday, [June,1836].

My dear Brother— . . . We had begun to wonder, rather uneasily, whither and how you had fared, when the first Newspaper came. It seemed likely you might make a longer stay in Edinburgh: but I can easily fancy all the contradiction you would experience in that poor hide-bound Athens, and how in a very few days, you might feel that it was exhausted for you, and brave Annandale remaining, still to break open. You do not speak of seeing Mitchell;* I fear, poor fellow, there was little hopeful or joyful to be seen about him. Gordon seemed to say the Doctors had given him up: he is often in my thoughts since that sad announcement. Or did you step out to Haddington? I think always of the worthy Johnstone with a very peculiarly kind feeling. He too *erduldet das Schicksal* [*endures his destiny*]; but in a gentler humbler way, so far from me; I often from these stormy granite ridges cast a look into his little nest, and wish him with my whole heart well.

I fancy you at Scotsbrig; leading the delightfullest idle life, —not so delightful to you, naturally, as it were to me. Yet Summer greenness and the breath of the West is good,—among those we love best in the world! Pray enjoy your *Sabbath weeks;* preparatory to new effort. Rome will be brighter of sky: but it will want much that you have there.—Tell me how

* Robert Mitchell and James Johnstone were early friends and correspondents of Carlyle. See Preface to "Early Letters"; also "New Letters and Memorials," i. 13.

our Mother *does*, now that Jenny * is gone; how she works and lives and adjusts herself. I remember the two little rooms: the Saddle hanging on its *nog* (*knochen*), with a Newspaper over it, and all the pots and pans. No King's Palace in the world is worth half so much to me as that little room. Do you ride; and has Jamie the dwarf cart-horse? . . .

It was not till Tuesday, that I got fairly fastened on the *Mirabeau:* † I have gone like a "house on fire" since then; and finished it last night! It is worth little: but there are above fifty pages of it, watery off-hand stuff, which will bring as many Pounds. Mill, after all my hurry, does *not* print it in this Number; but waits till next. *A la bonne heure!* I am done with it, and have washed my hands of it, and sent it to the Post-office early this morning. . . . The *Diamond Necklace* is not to answer, but to come back to me and to lie wrapt. "Hence the fermentation!"

. . . John Sterling continues tolerably improving; indeed, looks as well nearly as I ever saw him do. They have ordered him to ride; which he does daily. He came down here, one day, as he sometimes does again; to take Jane up with him to pass the afternoon and evening: he surrendered his fine horse to me, accordingly; and I had the most illustrious excursion, by trot, canter and gallop, far and wide; and returned to him in the evening through Hyde Park, considerably comforted, to fetch Jane back. He is for Bordeaux, he rather thinks now; certainly for Bordeaux first; and will go about the First of August, to leave time for Rome still, if needful. I am heartily

* Carlyle's youngest sister, lately wedded to Robert Hanning.

† The article, *Mirabeau* (Miscellaneous Essays), came out in the *London and Westminster Review*, No. 8 (1837).

sorry to part with him; he is the friendliest being I have met in the world for long years. I always fear, too good for the world!—Of the *Stimabile** we see nothing here, and not much anywhere; though he is always brisk and blithe. Jane and he never seem to meet now without sharp fencing and cutting. Poor "Werther of sixty!" It is a fast-changing world this; and To-day nowhere consents to be Yesterday.—The *degli Antoni* is very sick, of influenza; confined to her room these several weeks; none of us have got thither; though I often pity the poor dame. We were at her concert; she sang, and looked, dimly, in the distance. Jane was let through secret Opera-house passages to see her, and shriek into her arms. I remained in my place. Since that (some one else, perhaps one of the Frenchmen, giving me a ticket), I went to hear an Italian *Improvisatore!* He is called Pestrucci; a Roman, but in bad odour there, owing to his Carbonarism and Friendship-for-Humanity. A man of sixty; with a thin wooden face (of the type of your Engraver's) and nose *with a middle-cartilage* (do you know that particular turn of the nostrils?)—a tuft of grey hair as if flung upon the scalp of him; long, stalking legs, small body; grey, simple-vehement eyes: this is our Pestrucci. He strode and stalked, raked anxiously his fingers through the grey tuft, clasped his temples, sprawled, and got clear with sweat and stew; chaunting in the *canto-fermo* fashion (really not unlike old Lizzie Herd reading the Scripture); and produced—the day of small things. I understood the most of it;—enough of it: but was interested in the poor old lean man chaunting and

* Edward Sterling, John's father, the "Thunderer of the *Times*." For the origin of the nickname *Stimabile* see "Letters and Memorials," i. 36, n.

wriggling for a livelihood there, far from home.—We were also at the French Theatre one night; Cavaignac despatched his messenger with a Ticket, and we had to go. Worth while for once! They were acting *Figaro;* one Monrose, from Paris direct, was Figaro; considerably the best comic actor I have seen. A fine-looking man of fifty; with a fine French face, of the bushy-eyebrowed, black-eyed, broad-nostriled sort: a great deal of hidden satire in him, and quick insight. Our *Loge* was a hot hen-coop, in which anything bigger than a Bantam could not have felt comfortable. There was headache and fatigue; and a day lamed for work:—not to be repeated.

Why do I babble all these things to a judicious Doctor? Let me add, however, that I have got my white hat! A most noble broad-brim; price 6/6: of great comfort to me; and this not by the brim alone, I find, but also by the size, which lets in the air about me, and prevents the intrusion of headache: I find my last three or four Hats have been far too little. Jane shrieked, nay almost literally *grat* [wept], when she first saw me in such head-gear: however, I persisted (resolute against head*ache*); and she now says I do very well in it. Cockneydom happily does not seem to mind me at all, tho' probably there is not such another beaver within the four Ports of London.—Let me mention also that we had Liston here, Liston the Surgeon. He came one evening to see Jane, when all was confusion, Jane lying very sick: he is of enormous size, with bald, worn-looking head; a great flat-soled Scotch fellow, with much stuff in him, whom I considerably like.—The Frenchmen come here; especially Cavaignac, rather often, and now with strange *English* in his mouth.—There is a great lolloping, *schoolboy* character and

fresh, French nature in this Cavaignac—and I can do very tolerably with him of an evening. He seems to abound in cash; in want of hope and aim: unhappy enough; with wild bursts of affection and *bonhomie;* French and yet honest and artless: a wild *cameral,* Son of the woods! We have talked about Religion, too; and he is not so barren there as one thinks. Let him pass in peace, for the time our two roads lie in sight of each other!

But to wind up now, I say that the Garden must be sorted, which is getting very rank. The Doil [Dr. Carlyle] crop of turnips flourishes amazingly,—struck by the fly, a little; and will have actual bulbs in a few days. Beans, mignonette and all the rest, are growing and stretching in the most vagrant manner. It will take me two days. After *which,* there remains—*The Revolution* again. Health or sober strength is not to be thought of till I get done with that. But I purpose to write far *faster* at it; being really in a rage with it, in a scorn and contemptuous indignation at it. There is (*hoffentlich*) strength in me to do it. And after that, I will most surely have a *rest,* if there be rest in the world.—It is a great blessing for me however that we have such a Summer: I have yet suffered nothing at all by the heat (though I should fear the country must be suffering, for there has *been* no heat), and we have a little sprinkling of shower almost daily.

But now, dear Jack, what of thyself? When are we to meet here; when is a Letter to come? Let the Letter not delay, at any rate! As for the meeting, I can advise nothing; what I wish thou knowest: it seems cruel to advise any one to exchange simplicity and leafy Annandale for this Brick Sahara, tho' there is a Brother in it. The Red Bed stands in its place.

Be happy, my brave fellow; and do what will make thee happiest.—What if I should walk across the world; and come to you in Rome, next year, with the knapsack on my back! There is nothing *lost*, nothing impossible, if a man will but bestir himself. This Brick Sahara is not hateful to me at bottom, but hateful-loveable; and perhaps one day I shall thank it much.—Give my brotherly heart's love to all our Brothers and Sisters, by name every one, for I remember them all. Tell Isabella her cheese shall be broken up solemnly when you return: we trust it will do honour to the maker.—It is a very glad thing to me that my Mother will go to Manchester with you. I meant to write a scrap of my feelings to her on a scrap of paper by this cover: yet at bottom what had I to say, which she will not read here, or suppose as well? Jane is gone out, but left "abundant love to you all." I covet greatly the fresh air, and will go too. Write almost instantly. I will send you a Newspaper, probably on Monday.—May God keep my Mother and all of you! Amen!

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 6

To Dr. Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, Thursday, 14th July, 1836.

My dear Brother—Your Letter came yesterday; most welcome to me: last night I was at Mrs. Buller's rout (of the "flower of Radicalism") and begged a frank, tho' it was but little needful. Nothing but approval of your plans to send in it, but paper scraps, mementoes and good-wishes.—Consider, my dear fellow, I have sat here writing at my Book, till it is

a quarter past three; and then that I have an Enclosure for Jane to write!

Jane, as you may have gathered one way and another, set off on Saturday Night for Templand: she was really getting utterly sick and miserable, and had need to do it. By a Newspaper on Tuesday I learned that she had got safe to Manchester (I suppose Hanning * was waiting for her); by another Newspaper to-day I find her "just this moment got to Liverpool: sick yesterday"; and that she is to sail "on Thursday" (this day) tho' whether for Dumfries or Annan I cannot tell. You must see her, and be as good to her as you can; do not say Medicine can do nothing (tho' that I do believe is the truth): but question her, speculate with her, speak hope to her: she is very disheartened,—that is her grand ailment, with hot London; acting and reacting. I fancy that whenever she sees Templand she will be recovered.—And for you, come off hither with our Mother to Manchester at the set time, or as near it as may be. I had never more wish for you, than now in my loneliness. I am driving the *First Chapter* † like chaff with birch besoms before me; hope to have it done by the time you appoint, and then! All is right enough, if the nervous-system would but stand out; but it is not willing to do that.—I did not go near this German whose scrap is here; because I could not so much as read his name: most probably none of us three has lost much by it.

Your news of all the Annandale people, all struggling along in their paths, without faltering, without falling, were extremely comfortable to me. Give them love and affection of mine, one

* His sister Janet's husband.

† Afterwards called "Book I" (vol. iii., *September*).

and all, without limit. Better days are coming! that is always my text. Meanwhile, bear a hand tightly, and let no man slacken!

Mill asks me to go with him, as far as Dorking in Surrey where they have a Countryhouse, on Saturday till Monday morning. It is very uncertain whether I will go. It costs some shillings of money, it wastes some hours of time; and small enjoyment reaped by it. Mill, whom I went to see last week, is looking thin-brown, very old and worn: but complains not, calls himself *better*, and means to "travel for a month" soon. Of his Father we said little except in the way of reverent allusion.* Sterling you will still see. He talks of sailing on the 29th of the month—from this place I mean; or going by land a day later towards Portsmouth, and then sailing. I see more of him than of others, but little of any one. Milnes† asked me to dinner again: "sorry I could not." Dinners do nothing for me except hurt; nor the commerce of men. Work, thou poor Devil, I say to myself; there is good for thee nowhere in the Universe but there.—Cavaignac's Mother and Sister are come; I had to see them last night, Cavaignac being of the Buller rout, and to be under my escort. They are good French people; ugly, but true in their fashion: the Daughter, continually *souffrante*, has a small unbeautiful face (the mouth full of temper), but beautiful with courage and intelligence: she plays on the piano *jusqu'à l'impossible* (literally)—with small effect for me.—The Buller rout had Trelawny for lion, a huge black-whiskered, beetle-browed column of a man (*carrying* nothing that I valued); Lytton Bulwer, whom I did not notice with

* James Mill had died on the 23d of June, 1836.

† Richard Monckton Milnes, the late Lord Houghton.

the eye,—and seven "Persian Princes," with scimitars, turbans and long greenish gowns, came in about eleven o'clock. Thereupon I withdrew. *Ach Gott!*—Tell my Mother that I will write to her in Manchester. . . . Come directly, specifying day and coach, as you said.—Send up Jane's Letter, or take it up—with my Mother? Adieu, dear Jack.

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 7*

To His Wife, Templand.

Chelsea, Sunday, 24th July, 1836.

My dear Womannie—I promised on a Newspaper that I would write so soon as my Chapter was finished; and that great event having happened yesterday at two o'clock, I with right goodwill proceed to fulfilment. . . .

There has nothing gone wrong since you went away; and now that I have news of your safe resting beside your Mother, all is well. It was a sad shaking that of the long Coach-ride and whirling on Railways for a poor weak Goody, and would shatter her terribly; neither, I fancy, is the Country at its best, this rainy season: but still it is the country; it is your Mother; and the infinite fret and tumult of this place is far behind you. Splash away in the shower-bath; drink new milk (with a little brandy in it); tolerate the Country gossips; possess your wearied soul in patience; and come back to me rested and well, and *all* will be well. Hast thou recovered any hope? O thou of little faith!—Your Uncle never did a more judicious thing in his life than buying you that shawl,

* This is a reply to Letter 19, "New Letters and Memorials."

for which I thank him with all my heart. I hope you delivered my "*special* compliments"; it is a cheering kind of thing for me to remember a broad brave Annandale Man of that figure: how greatly different from the Formulas of Men one meets with, here and elsewhere!—Have you *got* baked Bread yet? I advise you to heat the oven with *coals*, and on the whole to realize Bread. Have you Cavaignac's Manuscript, or any kind of work? Be not solitary, be not idle.

Here, however, lest I utterly forget elsewhere, I must mention two most important things. The first is, touching a *Scrub*.* Anne, quite radiant when your Letter came, to hear that you were well and safe, said, or rather chaunted, about an hour after, in that querulous expostulatory tone: "But, if ye please, Mrs. *Cairlile* said—she was to fetch us *twae Scrubs?*" Tho' sunk in the depths at that moment, I could not restrain a visible smile; and answered, "Surely, surely, I would attend to *that.*" The second thing is touching those shirt-collars. . . .

Since that Saturday Night, I have had the most private, speechless, life of perhaps all men in London. Gibson † parted with me at the corner of Lad Lane; and I naturally did *not* go to his Walk next day. The weather then, as with you, became cool, became cold, wet; unfavourable for visitations; and hardly two or three mortals (always, too, at times when I was out) have come to stir the knocker. The French are occupied with *Ma Mère et ma Sœur;* Cavaignac, tho' he had made an appointment with his Dornet (the Advocate), and volunteered to that effect, did not make it out till three days after the time; and I have never seen him since, or got up yet to

* A saucepan-brush made of heather or ling stalks tied together.

† See "Letters and Memorials," i. 74.

see his women, tho' I meant to do it,—last night, if Jack had not come. . . .—But before quitting Cavaignac, I must tell you a thing I *saw* at Mrs. Buller's rout, but did not *discern* till a day or two after. Charles Buller led Cavaignac away to introduce him to a large lady, whom I afterwards perceived to be Mrs. G——: Cavaignac went, without struggling, tho' verily like a sheep led to the slaughter; the presentation performed, he made I think *five* successive low bows to Mrs. G—— (a very shower of rapid bows); then, without uttering a word, reeled back, like a sheep *from* the slaughter (or a *calf*, for you know how he *goes*), and landing in a very elegant attitude, stood, five paces off, with his hat behind his back, looking out into space, and the general movement of the rout,—*this* whole Introduction, Acquaintance, Friendship being begun, carried on, finished and abolished with such incredible brevity as I describe! It was two days before this phenomenon presented itself rightly before me; and it has tickled me ever since. . . .

. . . Of the *Stimabiles* [Sterlings] nothing; not a Stimabile since I last wrote. It is a week past on Friday night since I saw John (I went thither): I suppose him busied with making his arrangements, poor fellow, and not at all in good heart. My plan was to go to him to-day; which, if things allow, I shall still be glad to do. Yesterday (after finishing) I knocked for Mrs. Sterling, the Elder; she was not in: I left compliments, and those three little Volumes (*Maria Williams*) you were so anxious about.—One night also, being determined to *order* myself a pair of shoes (*trash* beyond utterance; ugly and *dear*, are my late pairs), I called on Allan Cunningham to ask: Not in. Then forward to Willis, to ask: Not in. Wherefore, home;—and the shoes are still unordered. Jack has offered

me an old pair; which I think I shall accept. By the bye, James Aitken has a pair of lasts lying ready, and a *cast* of my foot; will you take down these lasts, that image of the foot ("roots of *trieys*" * and all), and considering it deeply, and consulting with James who is a judicious man, see if you cannot order me a pair of shoes to be made off them? See if you cannot, Goody with that *hellen Blick* of yours! Poor James has sent me two pounds of Mundell's Tobacco by Jack; a sort of thing which, I know not why, almost made me *greet:* it was in huge coarse paper; the poor Brother had earned it by the toil of his right-hand: I remembered him a tow-headed judicious herd-boy; and so many chancings and changings had gone on since then. Thank him *heartily* from me (but not in the sad mood).—I believe you had also better choose me a pair of Winter trousers; you: and set Shankland on them, if he have the measure: wide enough, long enough; not too heavy, and of a dim colour! I shall then have nothing to do with Cockney snips for another blessed Winter,—perhaps never more in Time? . . .

As for the *Chapter* † entitled *September*, the poor Goody knows with satisfaction that it is *done.* I worked all day, not all night; indeed oftenest, not at night at all: but went out, and had long swift-striding walks (till ten) under the stars. I also slept in general tolerably: for the last two days, however, I have been poisoned again with *veal-soup* (beef being unattainable); I *will* know again! The Chapter is some thirty-six close pages:‡ not at all a bad Chapter;—would the Goody had it to

* His brother Alick had once remarked that Carlyle's toes were so long that they were "like the roots of *trieys* (trees)."

† See *ante*, p. 3, n.

‡ Extending to over 77 pages of print in the Library Edition.

read! A hundred pages more, and this cursed Book is flung out from me. I mean to write with the force of fire till that consummation,—above all, with the speed of fire; still taking natural *intervals*, of course, and resting myself; the unrested horse or writer *cannot* work. But a despicability of a thing that has so long held me and held us both down to the grindstone is a thing I could almost swear at, and kick out of doors; at least, most swiftly equip for *walking* out of doors. *Speranza*, thou 'Spairkin Goody; *Hope*, my little Lassie, it will all be better than thou thinkest!—For two or three days I am to have the most perfect rest now. Then Louis is to be tried and guillotined; then the Gironde, etc., etc.: it all stands pretty fair in my head; nor do I mean to *investigate* much more about it, but to splash down what I know, in large masses of colours; that it may look like a smoke-and-flame conflagration in the distance,—which it is.

The enclosed Minto Letter* was rather ill-used by me; at the words, "great day, the 13th," I (being indeed busy, and deprived of fifteen pence) put it quickly into the drawer, and proceeded again: but at night I did take it out and read it; with remorse, with pious sensibility. How bountiful Nature is! Even to the *stoory* [dusty] and the withered! And what does it cost *thee*,—unbrotherly churl?—If you thought there were any enjoyment for you at Minto, why not go? You are not writing a "French Revolution a History"; nor living on veal-soup.—In the Newspaper (*Courier* last) I read with a very sorrowful shock the notice of the Death of Mitchell. John had been writing to me of him; he had been many times in my sad

* From the Rev. David Aitken, of Minto, near Hawick, who this year married Eliza Stodart, Mrs. Carlyle's early friend and correspondent.

memory; my earliest, my innocentest friend. Murray (he is Editor of something) seemed to have drawn up that epicedial Paragraph: in the Editorial-Undertaker style;—to *him* most indifferent; and it is over, and one has him *no* more, never more!—

Jack and I have talked immensely since he came; he has mounted up stairs now and is quiet. My Mother and he passed through Liverpool (on Monday, I think): he regretted much that it was so early (eight o'clock, or some hour the Railway performed at) that he had to pass the Maryland-street door,* without knocking and brief greeting. He seems not in very high spirits, nor do I wonder at it. This morning, however, there came a Letter that William Fraser is to be in Rome over Winter.—I think his Medical way of treating you was unjust to himself and to you; though the scientific fact it went on was *true:* were our nerves better, we shall all be able to judge more justly. "Also ye shall bear one another's burdens": upon which everybody cries, "Then before all, in God's name, take mine!"—Shall I go to Sterling's to-night? To Cavaignac's? For the weather is cleared.

My dear little Janekin! I must leave thee now. Write a long Letter: they are all very pleasant, very good for me; but the "reposing humour" would give me most pleasure of all. *Gehab' Dich wohl! Sey hold mir; hoffe, zweifle nicht!* [Fare thee well! Be loving to me; hope, doubt nothing]. Kiss your kind Mother for me; say I wear her brown waistcoat, not without remembrances, daily: it is the respectablest piece in my suit. Give kind regards from me to Mr. Mundell,† worthy old man;

* Where John Welsh, Mrs. Carlyle's uncle, lived.

† Of the Wallace Hall School.

his Wife also you must include: and do not forget Mrs. Crichton,* but go and see her, and stay a day with her now and then. Adieu, *au revoir.*

Ever affectionately thine,

T. CARLYLE.

I have not called on the degli Antoni nor on any individual creature; but I will now. There were "compliments" from the Sterlings elder and younger, from the etc., etc. Jack salutes you with brotherly good-wishes. *Leb' wohl!*

LETTER 8

To His Mother, at Manchester.†

Chelsea, 27th July, 1836.

My dear Mother—Owing to such visiting and running about as there has been of late, you and I have fallen more out of correspondence than usual: it seems to me a long time since I wrote you a Letter. This day Jack and I have determined on both of us sending you our news, in the hope of getting a frank to carry them: he is busy up stairs, I down. As you have ventured so far Southwards, farther than you ever were before, a certain degree of *encouragement* is more than ever due. I bid you, dear Mother, very heartily welcome into England. When they have got their Railways set up, which will whirl one to London in ten hours more, we may hope to get you even as far South as this. You will "see London"; which, however, I apprehend is a *sight* you will not be in great ecstacies with. The persons that are in it, particularly one "long, ill-put-to-

* Of Dabton, near Thornhill.

† Carlyle's mother was now visiting her youngest daughter, Mrs. Hanning, who had settled in Manchester.

gether *cameral*" of a person in it, will be much welcomer as a sight. Six or seven whole Parishes covered with brick, a Town as long as from Scotsbrig to Colinn Tollbar: this is not a thing one rejoices much to see. I apprehend there is plenty of it in Manchester without going farther.

Jack was extremely welcome to me on Saturday night, just as I had done my work, and was likely to begin feeling the solitude more. . . . My unfortunate Book goes on now, at a far quicker rate; I shall surely be done with it some three months hence: I have done the first Chapter of the last Volume; it is a long Chapter, and the worst there was to do. Besides I mean to splash along at a much swifter pace in this Volume, with less of care; for the kind of subject has altered, and requires that mode of treatment at any rate. "It will not be a bad Book", as I always tell you! And so I shall get my dressing-gown paid at last; and have an unspeakable sorrow shuffled off my hands. —The Article on Mirabeau will be published in some two months or less; I will take care to send you a copy of it, which, after so long a fast from writings of mine, I hope you will read with great appetite. . . .

In the last Newspaper I read a notice of the death of my old friend Mitchell. It gave me a very sorrowful emotion. He was the oldest friend I had; one of the most innocently, gently industrious, well-doing, persevering men. John had written to me about him; and affected me, not a little, beforehand. He was just one year older than I am.—John Sterling goes away on Saturday morning next: also a loved friend, one of my last; obliged to fly to warmer Countries for his life, if indeed he can save it there. His Family goes all with him; he has shifted and shifted of late years: we have a shifting

time. I know not if I mentioned to you how an Uncle of his, an excellent man who came sometimes about us, was cut off suddenly, after a few days' illness in Spring last: the old Grandmother (Mother of this one; young Sterling's Grandmother) is come hither to live with the elder Sterlings; a bent woman of ninety-one. They thought the shock of her favourite Son's sudden death would kill her: but Nature is kind, and makes the very old incapable of feeling much: the old Greatgrandmother took it sweetly; chirrups and talks (I have seen her once) as lively as a cricket, and looks as if she might weather many a thing yet.

There has been a Letter* from Jane; but hardly with later news than you already have: it was written only some two days after John saw her at Dumfries. She spoke of the great kindness of all people to her; had been exceedingly gratified to see Robert's face look into the Coach for her at Manchester; praised Jenny for her "still ways";—and on the whole was got well home, and determined to *begin* mending; that was all she could as yet tell me. I have little doubt she will get better fast; I do not press her to return till she be stronger again: sickly here, so far from all help, is a very bad way of it. She has indeed had too much of the Town: two years of it, without a week of interval. The very whirl of the thing, so long, is enough to shake a weak creature. . . . Jack comforts me greatly by his account of your health, of your customary ways at Scotsbrig. Take care of yourself, my dear Mother; take care of yourself for all our sakes! . . . Now, you will write soon? Adieu, dear Mother!

Your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

* Letter 19, "New Letters and Memorials."

LETTER 9

To the Rev. John Sterling, Belsito, near Bordeaux.*

Chelsea, 11th September, 1836.

My dear Sterling—One evening, almost a fortnight ago, returning home from a long solitary walk in the twilight, I found lying on the table a Letter the superscription of which I *knew*. Nothing could be welcomer, more opportune. My Brother had left me that morning, we had waved hats sorrowfully at the St. Katherine Docks; my Wife was still in Scotland; I had worked all day, able to *do* no work: I felt unusually alone in this world. It is very sweet to hear a Brother's voice saluting us from the distance, in such mood: saying, "Thank Heaven, with me it fares thus and thus: now, How with thee?" It were very shabby Earth this, without a thing or two of that kind.

You paint me, so far as scenery and environment goes, a mere terrestrial Paradise there on the Garonne. Contrasted with the grinding dust and discord of this London it makes one sigh. Your own mood of mind too is all that one could expect: glad and sad. A sunny cheerfulness, continual activity; struggling to keep down an under-world of unrest. It is beautiful to me but also mournful: alas, so are the brightest men made; their Life like golden sunshine on a black deep river! My dear Friend, there is but one doctrine of *Philosophia Prima* that I would impress on you: *The necessity of sitting quiet.*

* "The name of his fine foreign mansion is Belsito; in the village of Floirac, within short distance of Bordeaux." Carlyle's *Life of John Sterling*, Bk. ii., chap. 3.

Could I but teach you that, you were verily, without flattery, one of the best fellows in this world. Nay as it is one finds you altogether exceedingly easy to tolerate; and prays you, in the name of Heaven, to take care of yourself, and get the *body* case-hardened a little; that so, sitting or running, quiet or unquiet, you may rough it out like the rest of us,—with fair play to you!

Meanwhile mourn not, my good Friend, to see yourself dissevered from all practical Activity, and put among the Supernumeraries (as Hypochondria will suggest). It is hard for the young soul, all budding with activities and capabilities, to hear it said, Thou shalt *not* be active. Nevertheless I protest, and could demonstrate as Euclid, that it is, many times, most merciful, beneficial for the young soul (if there be rich promise there); that most probably for *you*, in *your* case, it may prove furthersome and not hindersome. Or perhaps you already believe it, and know it; and will not thank me for my demonstration? If so, know it well, then; blessing God for it: and let the thought of it be as Peace to you in these pilgrimings, which for the present are not joyous but grievous.—I myself have been buried seven long years among Peat-Bogs, nearly forty years now amid black obstructions and confusions too tedious to mention; and I can speak on the subject: I declare it to be all right and good. How the seed-corn seems lost when you bury it! And yet that is but an *inadequate* similitude. On the whole *Silence* seems to me the Highest Divinity on this Earth at present. Blessed is *Silence;* the giver of all Truth, of all good that has any substance or continuance in it! If a man is to work, indeed, as a Reviewer, or Pamphlet-Book writer, or as a Parliamenteer, or Town-crier, Silence will not do for him at all. But if a man is not to work in any such way as these, but in a quite other and higher way,

then let him sit seven years silent, or half a century silent (nay for that matter, all his days *silent*),—the *net-result* cannot be got out of him otherwise. Seed-corn, as I said, is one thing; ground meal is another: this latter you must not bury. My faith as to John Sterling is that the fellow is not meant for *meal!* Therefore that this snatching of him away from me, tho' abundantly sorrowful, is even what it ought to be; that perhaps we shall both bless it yet; and finally—that for the present my Sermon ought to terminate. Take it as a real *Sermo*, or word spoken in earnest. The grand Application and use or Improvement of the whole is: Sit quiet, or as near as may be *stagnant;* in the stillness all blessed things will grow in you.—

But probably it were far better if I sent you instead of Sermon a large bundle of News. You know my seclusion here; also how all people at this season are roaming out of Town. About ten days ago, my Wife came home: I descried her trunks outside an Omnibus in Fleet-street, as I went to meet her; the Mail having come earlier than usual. She esteemed it a mark of great genius. The poor Dame had suffered very greatly, and did nothing but complain from Scotland: but she has done much better ever since her return, and is really now about as well as usual. She sends you many a kind remembrance, not by this sheet only but by many a spiritual conveyance on which no postage is charged. This day week I saw Mrs. Austin; lately returned from Boulogne; and now making ready for Malta, of her Husband's appointment to which I fancy you have heard. It is an appointment to be Minos and Lycurgus of Malta, as I often say; for which he ought to bless the Powers continually; nay Minos and Lycurgus had to *enforce* as well as

legislate, and here is all Britain to enforce for Austin! Nevertheless one may doubt if it will do much for him; so [*seal covers*] fied a man has he grown; and *produces* nothing but acid,—perhaps of an antiseptic quality: that evening he was confined sick. Cornewall Lewis was there; Henry Taylor, beautiful man, and on the same sofa with him a Saxon Countess (Löwenthal, I think) a beautiful woman. The conversation went on in French; and amounted to—a pleasant time of Music or Sonata: of which some crabbed Fontenelle might have asked, indeed: *Sonate, que me veux tu?*—John Mill has written to somebody from Marseilles; to go thence by Leghorne, to Naples, etc.: his health, unfortunately, appeared to be no better; I am not without my anxieties for Mill. By the bye, let me mention that his Review does not come out till October: I have had the *Mirabeau* Article in my hand; terribly defaced by the Printer; if I can I will manage to get you a copy of that at least, tho' you will relish it but indifferently.—Maurice has come twice athwart me: a man I like always for his delicacy, his ingenuity and earnestness: he is wonderfully patient of me, I often think; and I ought to esteem his way of thought at its full worth, and let it *live* in me, if I could. Hitherto, I regret to confess, it is mainly moonshine and *Spitzfindigkeit*, and will not live. But the man is good, and does live in me.—There are Books, etc.: but behold I have no room for them. One Book let me recommend to you as very well worth reading: Rémusat's Translation of "*The two Fair Cousins*" from the Chinese. Would you like to see a man of real *genius* struggling to express himself, and actually becoming discernible, under the figure of "dragon-letter verses," Chinese formalities and formulas, buy this Book. A man who really *sees* into objects; and under his

silk gown and Mandarin ways, has a certain impetuosity in him.

As to myself I am about as good as half done with the last Volume of that unfortunate Book: I have at present no other history. My one wish is to have the miserable rubbish washed off my hands: the sole blessedness I expect or desire from it is that of being done with it. After which——? No man in Europe perhaps has a blanker future;—which however we will prevent, if possible, from getting *black*. Is one not *alive?* Is not this universe *his* too, and this little sun-gilt Planet, in some measure—tho' the Record Offices, with their Attorney Parchments would fain persuade us of the contrary?* Me they had long so persuaded; but by God's blessing, shall never more do it. A fig for such Record Offices! There is a Record Office that I know of worth a thousand of them.

> "*Uns rufen die Geister,*
> *Die Stimmen der Meister:*
> *Sie heissen uns* HOFFEN!" †

And so, God bless you, my dear Friend; and preserve you very well for a blessing to me.

Yours very heartily,

T. CARLYLE.

Your beautiful *Dürer*‡ hangs over the sofa where you sat last: the stick you lent me that night is in the lobby, an almost still kinder memorial. It says daily, *Gedenke meiner*, as I go out.

* Carlyle expands this thought more fully in the *Historical Sketches* (p. 345), in the passage ending with the words, "Immensity is my inheritance, and also the eternity that is to come."

† *After* Goethe's "Mason-Lodge." See *ante*, p. 1, n.

‡ Engraving of Christ Bearing the Cross.

LETTER 10

To Dr. Carlyle, Geneva.

Chelsea, 12th September, 1836.

My dear Brother—Now on this Monday morning, having finished handsomely enough on Saturday night the Chapter I was engaged in when you went, I proceed to write, "at my leisure," as you settled it should be. To-morrow morning, if you keep your latest date, there will be packing up and departure from Paris; if this can overtake you, and be waiting for welcome at Geneva, it will be well; but any way I think it will find you there.

I plodded home that Monday morning a weary kind of man. There was no omnibus running in my direction at that hour: it was near ten when I set myself down to a breakfast now grown solitary, with the rustle of your steam-paddles in my imagination, and tumult enough whirling up and down in me. I struggled to work all day, and did sit working, tho' with little effect, till almost six o'clock: then out for a little ramble in the still dusk; at my return home from which there lay, welcome enough for me in that mood, a kind Letter from John Sterling. His Father and Mother were come home from the Netherlands, and had sent it me: John describes the Country and people in that region as making good the name of his place, *Belsito;* his own humour seems hasty-esurient, vivid and full of activity, far too full; hope, cheerfulness, gladness, and a dark current of unrest running underneath. Next morning came your Dover Newspaper. I did not know what a day of weary watching you were just then getting there. Then came

also (*behind* the time!) the Proofsheets of the Article Mirabeau The Printer had botched and blotched it dreadfully with his improvements, improved punctuation (of *dashes*, etc., which I detest): all day was spent till near midnight, bringing it back to where it was; a "new Proof" was ordered;—which I wrote about again yesterday, said new Proof not having come. Your Boulogne Newspaper did arrive like the rest; and cost me, I am pretty sure, nothing. On Wednesday there were news that Jane was on the road; that she would arrive by the Liverpool Mail on Thursday evening at seven! . . . On that Thursday evening, . . . I strode off at a great rate towards Lad Lane, being threatened a little with *lateness*. In the rolling torrent of Fleet-street, I descry a Trunk known to me; I stop the omnibus: my Wife sits there! This exploit I tell everybody as wonderful. The poor Dame was full of headache: but we got home with the last streaks of day; she has grown better and better as yet ever since. She is now about as well as her average condition used to be. My best prophecy in this respect is fulfilled.—The Paris Newspaper came on Tuesday (I think); . . .

Having told you that my Second Chapter* is in the drawer, I have brought up my own Biography completely enough. The Chapter is longer than I expected; not right, yet it must do. I have a great lesson to learn: that of *einmal fertig werden* [getting done once for all]. Much poring does but confuse, and reduce all to caudle. Get it done, and let there be an end! The bricklayer does not insist on all being smooth as *marble*, but only on all having a certain *degree* of smoothness and straightness; and so he gets a wall done. As to what you ad-

* *I.e.*, Bk. ii., vol. iii., "Regicide."

monished about *style*, tho' you goodnaturedly fall away from it now, there was actually some profit in it, and some effect. It reminds me once more that there are always two parties to a good style: the contented Writer and the contented Reader. Many a little thing I propose to alter with an eye to greater clearness. But the grand point at present is to get done *briefly*. I find I have only eighty-eight pages in all, and infinite matters to cram into them. I purpose *investigating* almost no farther; but dashing in what I already have in some compendious, grandiose-massive way. There are some three Chapters yet: the first the *Girondins;* for Louis is now well guillotined. Forward! This week I will do off that *Histoire Parlementaire* Article; bring up my correspondence, clear the decks in that way; then, perhaps about the time you are reading this, To my *Girondins!* I *had* already found out the medicinal *Schachtel*, and been at it; I feel really very well at present; and could almost persuade myself it were the natural state of *wellness:* perhaps it is after all; and *stagnancy* is the unwholesome state for me? The joy I anticipate in finishing this Book is considerable. Go thou unhappy Book, that hast nearly wrung the life out of me; go in God's name or the Devil's! One will be *free*, after that; and look abroad over the world to see what it holds for one. *When* I shall get finished it were not good to predict; all my settings of time hitherto have proved false: but surely in some few months now we *shall* be over.—. . .

I am reading *Eckermann's Conversations with Goethe;* borrowed from Mrs. Austin: it does me great good for the time. Such a clear serene environment, so different from *this* Revolution one; and yet it is not *my* environment now; will not yield me *Obdach* [shelter] here and now! Goethe is great, brown-

visaged, authentic-looking in this Book; yet *räthselhaft* [enigmatic] here and there to me. The sending of Neureuther's *Randzeichnungen* [marginal illustrations] to "Herrn Carlyle," the thought that it would give "some pleasure *diesem Freunde*" almost made me weep. I have done the *Expedition of Cyrus*: I am for the *Memorabilia*. Jane is on the *Iu-Kiao-Li*,* and translating *Cavaignac*, on her *own* strength nearly altogether. She gives me a little music at night; we have a fire and the Sinumbra;† *sehr einsam, eingezogen* [very lonely, solitary], which is the way I like for the time. Hunt I have not seen again; your Letter went to the Willises. Enough, enough.

Do not conjugate *ennuyer*, dear Jack, if you can help it: conjugate *espérer* rather. It will be the best news we can get that the Brass Plate is *up* at Rome. Depend upon it, *working*, trying, is the only remover of *Doubt*. It is an immense truth that. The stream looks so cold, dreary, dangerous, you stand shivering; you plunge in, behold it carries you, you can swim! . . .

All yesterday, dear Jack, I was not across the threshold—for *Goethe* and the rain. To-day there is a kind of semi-fairness; I must not play the same trick, but go, and so *leave* the margins. Farewell, therefore, my dear Jack! May a good token come soon.—

Your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

* The Chinese novel translated by Rémusat. See *ante*, p. 29.

† "Sinumbra," the shadowless, a kind of lamp, or contrivance for burning a large wax candle. It is now (1903) to be seen at Cheyne Row.

LETTER 11

To the Rev. John Sterling, Bordeaux.

Chelsea, 3rd October, 1836.

My dear Sterling—Yesterday at Knightsbridge your good Mother chanced to mention that a Parcel was about setting out for you; which, I calculate to-day, may carry Letters; may carry one Letter, or slight line from me among the rest. You are to understand that, in the present half-desperate posture of my affairs and humours, I have, for a while back, fallen into the literally *total* abandonment of Letter-writing; finding silence the suitablest: I write to nobody whatever, except once in the three weeks some word or two to my Mother; once in the month another word or two to my Brother. Consider my writing to you therefore as a proof that you also are of the kindred;—which I hope you esteem an honour, of its sort.

The news we get of you are vague; much seems still dubious even for the nearest future. I grudge that you should quit your beautifully civilized *Belsito* for a dull savage Land of Timber (*Materies*, Madeira); but if the Doctors say it, why then we must submit. Meanwhile, they say you are jaunting about pretty pleasantly; which ought to content us for the time. You have been at Lilbourne, and looked doubtless into the caves of Saint Emilien; where I likewise often am, in fancy,—with these cursed Girondins of mine! Next year, if it please the Upper Powers, why should not I come and see you there, once more; a knapsack on my back, a strong oak-stick in my hand; this Earth with its greenness belonging to me as well as to another? By the bye, the oak-stick shall be the one you

gave; *so* much is settled: I have got a sufficient ferrule for it some days ago, not without difficulty, and fitted it on the same with my own hand and ingenuity: I propose to walk with it, as long as it will hold together; and to think often of a certain beautiful little episode in my poor Life-Epos, which has not many such in it. Episode it has been; Fate cannot hinder it from having been: a kinder Power may make it *more* yet, if such seem the best method.* I was remarking to Jane, the other morning, that with Sterling I had unfortunately lost what was the flower of all that London had for me. But let there be no grumbling, no hypochondria: silent, cheerful of heart, wait what the Hours will bring.

John, from whom I have a Letter (dated Geneva) this morning, sends the friendliest inquiries after you; charges me to inform him what you resolve upon for the winter. He says one of the secret reasons that determined him, perhaps more than he was aware of, to go back to Rome, was the hope of having Sterling there. I really believe it: people go upon strange reasons; our Doctor is one of the strangest of men.

No Review or Article *Mirabeau* comes with this Parcel; which omission, or seeming omission, was the point principally I had to explain by scrawling to-day. The Article *Mirabeau*, after fretting me I think four several times with unwelcome interruption, of Proofsheets, MS., Copy, etc., etc., all in hot haste, turns out to be "too long for the present No."; wherefore the unfortunate Able-Editors omit it. Not till January therefore can you hope to behold this remarkable Production. As the French Advocate said, when the Judges ordered him into

* This stick, always treasured as a memento, hung in Carlyle's dressing-room until his death.

arrest: "I begin to be weary of the treatment I experience here."

The Revolution History goes on about as ill as anybody could wish. I am really quite out of order; owing partly perhaps to this frightful splashing weather: I sit down to write, there is not an idea discernible in the head of me; one dull cloud of pain and stupidity; it is only with an effort like swimming for life that I get begun to think at all. Nevertheless the thing does go on; and shall by God's blessing go on till it is ended, or I am ended: other blessedness one cannot hope from it. My habitual conviction about the work is that it ought to be *burnt*, that it will never be worth a farthing to any man or woman. Yet I do not burn it: I go floundering along; hoping that the heavy hand of this Enchantment shall be got loosened from me (for it is really like a spell), and I be *free*, were it only with no possession, beyond that of freedom, remaining now for me. Forward, therefore.

Mill, they say, writes from Nice: he is not going into Italy, owing to Cholera and quarantine: his health is a little, and but a little, improved. . . . I saw Taylor lately; very grave and happy enough. He is devising new Dramas. He could not fancy why you were not delighted to be free from business,—as he himself would be; for a time at least. It is the way with us all.—The Wilsons are at Tunbridge; the Bullers are in Switzerland. I have not seen Maurice. Your worthy Mother looks ten years younger for her trip to the Netherlands: I think you will rejoice to have this under my hand. The Head of the House is also well; dashing along, in the old erratic manner, with the old impetuosity and velocity; on the whole, with a healthy vitality, which it does one good to look on. I

grow to honour health of mind beyond all things in this world; health of body, which is generally the near relative to it, only a degree less. My dear Friend, let us both get well! I do hold it in my own case, a kind of disgrace and crime to be sick: is it not Nature herself with her great voice that says to me: Fool, seest thou not that thou art *astray;* not in the right road thou (tho' all the world gabbling recommend it), but in the wrong one? Were the Book done, I will see into it.—

The sheet is done, my dear Sterling; and not the Book. Too suddenly! I beg a kind remembrance to Mrs. Sterling; to the young Lady you permitted me to call "Anne Barton," who I suppose is in Ireland.—Think of me with tolerance; as of a sinful man who righteously loves you. Adieu!

T. CARLYLE.

My Wife is out walking, and does not know of this; otherwise her kind word had been here. She is not well; and yet not worse than you have been used to see her, far better than while in Scotland.

I read an interesting little Book in two volumes; *Gespräche mit Goethe* by Eckermann: did I mention it in the other Letter? It is very curious to see the *Welt-Dichter* conditioned down into the Weimar Burgher and *Staats-rath*. Many of his *measurements*, of things and persons, I found utterly erroneous, his *footrule* meanwhile a very correct one. In place and work, he and I part wider every day. *Vivat* still!

LETTER 12

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 20th November, 1836.

My dear Mother—Though I have nothing any way special to say, I think of writing to you to-night, as I have an hour at my own disposal; and I am very sure you will be glad to hear me even say nothing. I am at the end of another Chapter in that weary Book of mine: writing to you is a little piece of recreation that I think always I have merited in those cases. I used to come driving over from Puttock personally, when I had finished any small feat of that sort; so now I send off a written sheet; which, tho' as old Parliament-Geordie said of striking the Dog is but a "*puir* revenge," is the next-best I can do.—There are franks attainable now too; certain "honourable members" having got back to Town again.

We have had a most quiet time of it, ever since I wrote last; very solitary, which when you are busy is not *dull:* all people that can manage it run out of London in the Autumn; down to the sea-shore, over to the Continent, to Scotland, Wales, etc.; this they esteem an essential condition of existence. My way, could I manage it, would be to quit London in the broiling dog-days, of July, when all is like a furnace with heat and smoke; and to spend these *back-end* months *in* London, where they are usually as pleasant as elsewhere. But these people manage this, like much else, in a way of their own.—One good consequence is that, being left so much alone, if you have *work* to do, you get on faster with it then than at any other season. About this time, however, everybody is returning; almost all

our old friends are got back; and the old system resumes its course again. That it brings franks with it you will not esteem the worst quality of it.

This Chapter which I have just ended carries me to within *forty-five* pages of the end of the Book! I expect to have a bit of wrestling yet with it; but to *be* through about Newyears-day. You must tell Alick and Jean and all my friends to be patient with me till then. I have no heart to write to any one, about anything, while in such a tumult. But were I once "borne through with an honourable through-bearing,"—then it will be a very different matter.—Under the article of Works, I must also tell you that the first half of my little History of the *Diamond Necklace*, which I spoke of last time, is actually printed for *Fraser*, and will appear next month with my name: the second half on the following month. Copies are to be kept for me (I mean, separate-copies), and I will take care to have one forwarded to you, as soon after as possible. Also the Article on *Mirabeau* (his name is pronounced Merabo) will certainly appear in January, and likewise, probably in the same Number of Mill's *Review*, another little Article I have written on the French Revolution, or rather on the *Books* that have heretofore been written about it.* The copy of *Mirabeau* will also be sent you; and of the last little thing too, if it seem to be worth anything. I rather think it will be worth almost nothing,—except some ten or twelve guineas to *myself*. Lastly they write to me from America that their Edition of *Teufelsdröckh* is altogether sold: poor *Teufelsdröckh!* Mill declares he is going to review it here. So that you see, with the commencement

* The "Parliamentary History of the French Revolution" was published in the *London and Westminster*, No. 9 (1837).

of the year, there is going to be quite an *explosure!* "Not killed, my merry men!" not at all: "we'll lie and bleed a while, then rise and fight again."

Above a month ago there came to me a Painter, he is a man named Lewis whom I once saw for a moment in Dumfries; he is now come to settle in London; and did most earnestly request me to come and sit for my Picture, that he might exhibit it next Summer in the general exhibition, and do himself good thereby. The Picture after that to be mine. Leigh Hunt's son's Picture, of which I think I once told you, came to nothing: after six sittings, it grew always the uglier without being the liker; whereupon I silently gave it up. Of this Lewis however, on looking at the Pictures he had already done, we could hope better: Jane earnestly persuaded me to go; nay the poor thing was determined to have me drawn with money out of her own poor clothes purse—"before I grew quite old": so I went, and the thing is done. It is glaringly recognizable; has a distinct likeness of *you* in it: he has drawn me sitting in a chair; down all the way to the knees and lower all is given; it is the size of your window and larger. I do not like it myself; but I do like much that I am done with it. The man Lewis has decidedly a kind of talent, I think; and with great good humour, which he also has, may make way here. I got considerable amusement from rugged Glasgow stories he kept telling me all the while; there is nothing of that kind to be had in Cockneydom. One of the anecdotes he gave is this, which I have laughed at, twenty times since: An old coal-miner was bragging of the great depths he had been to in the heart of the earth; a neighbour wished to know, *how* deep specially? the other said, he could not tell *how* deep it might be; but he had

"many a time heard *the Deevil hoastin'* "—which certainly was deep enough!—As for the Picture, I hope you will see it sometime, were it only for its likeness to the Mother of the Original. It is probable that it will go to Templand to be hung up ultimately. . . .

Two or three days ago, there came here to call on us a Miss Martineau, whom you have perhaps often heard of in the *Examiner;* a hideous Portrait of her was given in *Fraser*, one month. She is a notable Literary woman of her day; has been travelling in America these two years, and is now come home to write a Book about it. She pleased us far beyond expectation: she is very intelligent-looking, really of pleasant countenance; was full of talk, tho' unhappily deaf almost as a post, so that you have to speak to her through an ear-trumpet. I think she must be some five-and-thirty.* As she professes very "favourable sentiments" towards this side of the street, I mean to cultivate the acquaintance a little, and see whether it will lead to aught. She invited me to dinner "for Tuesday"; but I had a cold, that day she came; and do not think I shall venture. . . . Jane holds up as well as possible: she has hardly had one bad headache since she came back; her trip to Scotland, doleful as it was, has done her good.

You got a French Newspaper from Jack; and were able to make out the word *Marseille* on it? Marseilles is the Southernmost Town in France, where they embark for Italy. Jack gave token of all being well then. I am daily expecting another Letter from him; perhaps from Rome itself. The *Cholera* they say is gone from Italy; or at least the quarantine impediments

* A good guess: she was in her 35th year, having been born 12th June, 1802.

have ceased. There would be a Letter from me, I hope, waiting at Rome. Jack was requested to write, directly "when he had got a Lodging for himself." . . . John Mill, who is just returned from these regions, and indeed was here with me a long time to-day, had lost no fewer than *ten* Letters by the uncertainty of foreign Posts. Mill is very considerably improved in health; tho' still complaining of his head somewhat.

I know not how much I would give for a bird's eye view of Scotsbrig, for one half hour, at present. Much *pluistering* and splashing there has been there, no doubt, in this wild harvest: but better or worse, it is all got over now. With what results? Tell James to write a Postscript himself: or Isabella can do it. But it is you, good Mother, that must *begin*. I many times wonder how you are getting on in the upper story yonder, amid the wild gusty winds. Has your health not suffered sadly in such weather? That there has been nothing serious going wrong, I infer always from James Aitken's Newspaper Address. But colds and the like are almost inevitable. Do you keep good fires? I think you have a kind of conscience that way. There is nothing like *fire*, in such weather. I hope my saddle and you are very *dry* there; and do not let the dreary winter take hold of you too much. There will be little Travelling practicable in these months; but they must travel to *you:* it is a great thing also that you have a faculty for reading. I wish I knew any Books I could send you, or anything else: I can only send Letters and scrawls; but that is a reason the more why I ought not to neglect *them*. Were the bright weather come back again, I have a hope of seeing you and Scotland again: a lighter-hearted man than I was last time. . . .

Emerson the American friend writes me a most gentle affectionate Letter about the sudden death of a beloved Brother of his. He was one of the most promising young men in America, I understand; was just going to be married, and Emerson was "enlarging his house" for new accommodation,—when alas the Narrow House proved the one appointed!—He is a good man, that Emerson; nothing can be better than the pious way he takes this great loss. He has sent a little Book of his writing too, which is extremely good in spirit.—I will break off abruptly to-night, but add a word on the cover. Best good night!

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 13

From His Mother.

Scotsbrig, 7th December, 1836.

Dear Son—I need not say how glad I was to see your hand once more. It had lain at the Post Office for some time I think; for I had got the Annan ones the day before, which I think must have been sent later than it. They were all thrice welcome. I am glad to hear you are getting on with your Book, in spite of all the difficulties you have had to struggle with, which have been many. May they be all for your good! I hope they will be in the end. I need not say, for you know already, that I wish it a happy birth and long life.—Keep a good heart: may God give us all grace to stay our minds on Him who has said in His Word, He will keep them in perfect peace whose minds are stayed on Him, because they trust in

"Wait on the Lord, and be thou strong, and He shall strength
afford
Unto thy heart; yea, do thou wait, I say, upon the Lord.
. . . . . .
What time my heart is overwhelm'd, and in perplexity,
Do Thou me lead unto the Rock that higher is than I."

Let us not be careful what the world think of us, if we can say with a good conscience, with Toplady:

"Careless, myself a dying man,
Of dying men's esteem;
Happy, O God if Thou approvè,
Though all beside condemn."

You will say "I know all these things." But they are sooner said than done. Be of courage, my dear Son, and seek God for your Guide.

I was glad to hear of John having got to Rome. He has had many wanderings, poor fellow. When you write will you thank him for his Letter he sent me. I was got rather uneasy about him.

I think there are none that has so much cause of thankfulness as I.—We are all going on in the old way; but it has been such a year as I do not remember of for bad weather. It has grown worse and worse. Nevertheless, it is better than we deserve; for we are froward children, a sinful generation. God be merciful to us sinners! He has never dealt with us as we deserve.

I have been full well all this Winter, till I got a face-cold and a toothache: it is better now, almost gone. I keep good fires and am very dry and comfortable.

Alick was here yesterday; they are all well. I get the Paper pointedly from Manchester.

Give my love to your Goody. I am glad to hear she is rather better. I will be glad to see you both here to rest a while when the fight is over.—There perhaps never was a greater scrawl. Wink at it. James is to finish it. God bless you, my dear children.

Your affectionate Mother,

MARGARET A. CARLYLE.

LETTER 14

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 29th December, 1836.

My dear Jean—. . . It is a very long time since I have written to you, or heard from you; never in my days did I write fewer Letters; I have no heart to write to anybody, if it be not on some instant compulsion of business. Not that I have forgotten any Friend I ever had; nay perhaps you are all oftener and more vividly in my memory than usual: but in this pressure of foreign things round me, my head kept full of one weary work and thought, I can do nothing but passively remember and send silent good-wishes: to write seems as if it were an *impossibility*. Courage, however! we shall get the thing done, with the *gea* * of life in us still; then come freer days, and matters take their old course.

. . . I have sent the First Chapter of that everlasting Book actually to the Printer! They have done nothing at it yet, all the men being "engaged in drinking" at this Season of

* Or *gee*, spark, go.

the year; besides that, there are some formalities as to type, shape, etc., to be settled: but this once managed, we shall go along *skrieving,** I hope: and wash our hands of the whole early in March. The Third Volume was brought up *to be as large as* either of the preceding, some two days ago: nevertheless it is not yet finished off; it is only like the sole of a stocking (in the hands of a knitter) made ready for *taking in:* one brief Chapter will rapidly close it now; this I shall expect to do very handsomely while the printing proceeds. Wherefore you will all wish me "whole hands" for another two months; and after that, "joy" of being freed from the ugliest labour I ever went through since I knew the world. A deliverance equal to that of Christian when his Burden fell off him (in the Pilgrim's Progress), and he saw it bounding down hill, every leap larger than the last,—down to (I suppose) Perdition, where it had arisen from! Or perhaps only to *Tchawos,*† a place known to James's old Schoolmaster?

After this, I had resolutely determined on having some rest, and am still determined, tho' all should go to *crowdie:*‡ but some people here will have it that I should deliver a brief course of Lectures, say on *German Literature;* at a place called the Royal Institution, where all manner of fashionable people gather in the Spring months to hear such! . . .

It seems quite possible I may try this: it will not cost me much trouble, for I mean to *speak* the Lectures (having grown *ill-haired,*§ and impudent enough for that), and there is tolerable payment; and more, an introduction to more extensive

* At a rattling pace.
† A schoolmaster's pronunciation of *chaos.*
‡ Oatmeal scalded with water.
§ Indignant.

enterprises of the like. We shall see, we shall see! It will depend very considerably on what spirits I feel myself in when the time comes. As yet the whole cry is, Print, Print! We will wind up that; and then!

. . . On Sunday morning last, after a preparation of North wind the day before, we found it snowing; a thing rather unusual here. It was a heavy snow, however; howling, and wreathing itself, in a way that would have done honour to Craigenputtock. It has dribbled and powdered away, almost ever since; . . . London looks very curious; there is such a silence in it, the wheel-vehicles making no noise, very few of them indeed being out, the horses make much sprawling; many persons drunk at anyrate, and a few others (not the fifth part of the usual number) tripping along muffled in cloaks, with blue noses. The citizens fling their snow from the roofs, the policemen forbidding it or not. Omnibuses lumber along, occasionally with springs broken; the horses smoking, sometimes *reested** altogether. Five men sang out in our street yesterday morning, as if the end of the world had arrived: "Poo Gawnas (Poor Gardeners)! Poo Gawnas! All froze out!" —they had a huge cabbage-stock elevated on a pole by way of standard, and were begging with their whole heart and their whole soul, "Poo Gawnas! Poo Gawnas". I could not help bursting into laughing at the zeal of them; they had but been "froze out" for two days; and they seemed by the sound of them, as if victual were a thing they had only heard of by tradition.—Coals are greatly risen; and the poor improvident people are like to be ill off. . . .

I send this as a general New Year's wish to you first, and

* Stopt, and refusing or unable to go on.

thro' you to one and all. You will convey my Brotherly salutation to Scotsbrig, to Annan; as if I had named everyone of the household. I hope it will be there before *Old* New-year's day at any rate: my *wishes* will be there; no thickness of snow can keep out them. Jane is this moment come in from a walk in the frost and snow-powder; in time to join her salutation. I must now out, with this; and will send it off, frank or no frank. Write to me soon, as I said, and very copiously; taking leisure hours, as you can find them. Has my Mother her Beer-keg still? Pray look to this. I beg you all to keep on good fires; and sit as thankful, as hearty as you can. God's blessing be with every one of you!——Ever your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 15

To the Rev. John Sterling, Belsito, Bordeaux.

Chelsea, 17th January, 1837.

My dear Sterling—This New-year's wish which I now send you is a pleasure to myself I have long looked forward to. Ever since your Letter came I have said to myself, were this malison of a Book done, I will write to John. Nay perhaps John will write to me a second time on credit in the interim? His Letter is like a warm sun-glance and breath of the South in this dreary London fog!—John has not written a second time on credit;—which who could ask him to do? But here is this Book actually tied up under pack-thread, the burning Nessus' Shirt stripped off me: and so now in a state of comfortable nudity and frigescence we write to him.

Do you know the Scottish word *threep?** I had taken a *threep* that I would write to no one, that I would not quit London, or know any rest, satisfaction or pleasure of life till the despicability of a task were done. I declare, no man was ever so near being drowned, according to another Scotch phrase, "in a spoonful of water!"—However, as I said, it is over; five days ago I finished, about ten o'clock at night; and really was ready both to weep and to pray,—but did not do either, at least not visibly or audibly. The Bookseller has it, and the Printer has it; I expect the first sheet to-morrow: in not many weeks more, I can hope to wash my hands of it forever and a day. It is a thing disgusting to me by the faults of it; the merits of which, for it is not without merits, will not be seen for a long time. It is a wild savage Book, itself a kind of French Revolution;—which perhaps, if Providence have so ordered it, the world had better *not* accept when offered it? With all my heart! What I do know of it is that it has come hot out of my own soul; born in blackness, whirlwind and sorrow; that no man, for a long while, has stood speaking so completely alone under the Eternal Azure, in the character of man only; or is likely for a long while so to stand:—finally that it has come as near to choking the life out of me as any task I should like to undertake for some years to come; which also is an immense comfort, indeed the greatest of all.—To wind up this part of the business, I may tell you that the Article *Mirabeau* is published, and a thing called *Diamond Necklace* is publishing (the latter in *Fraser's Magazine*); and that "the Country Newspapers," as Fraser tells me, express extreme dissatisfaction. I shall have

* "A vehement or pertinacious affirmation"; a sort of oath, made privately.

a separate copy of each, in few days, for you; and leave it at Knightsbridge: and see *you* then, if you dare for the life of you, join with the Country Newspapers! Like a recreant, as you—are *not* altogether! We will now therefore turn a new leaf.

The news we get from Belsito, which one way and another come tolerably often, are for most part of a very favourable kind. Allowing that you study to shade for us a little the shady parts, we have still great reason to be thankful. Keep your heart quiet, my Friend; learn the great art of *resting:* there is positively nothing else you want to bring you *all* manner of good. But you do want that; you must learn it and acquire it: that is the task set you at this time. My Brother's news of you are that your account of your health is not so good as he expected; that it is still possible that he may see you in Rome: his joy for his own sake, not for yours, at such a possibility, again comes in words. When am *I* to see you next? It is all uncertain as the wind this day twelvemonth; yet surely we shall meet again somewhere under the sun before long. May the Heavens turn it well! I will repeat you again the little song that goes humming through my head, very frequently in these times; the only modern *Psalm* I have met with for long: (*Here followed four verses of Goethe's "Mason Lodge,"* **—the first and the fourth being omitted.*)

Is it not a piece of Psalmody that? It seems to me like a piece of marching-music of the great brave Teutonic Kindred as they march through the waste of TIME,—through that section of Eternity *they* were appointed for; *oben die Sterne* and *unten die Gräber,* with the *Stimmen der Geister,* the *Stimmen*

* For a translation of the six verses of this poem, see Carlyle's "Past and Present."

der Meister! Let us all sing it, and march on cheerful of heart. "We bid you hope"; so say the Voices. Do they not?

One of the announcements you made me was as welcome as any other: that you were rather *quitting* Philosophy and Theology. I predict that you will quit them more and more. Not surely till *the time;* not till they have done for you what they needed to do. A man can do nothing but prosecute faithfully the thing that his soul points to: let no counsel or cacklement of friends and Country Newspapers slacken him in that: these mean well, but they know not what they say! Nevertheless I will give it you as my decided prognosis (grounded on good medical pathology and auto-pathology) that the two Provinces in question are become Theorem, Brain-web and Shadow; wherein no earnest soul can find solidity for itself. Shadow, I say; yet the shadow *projected* from an everlasting *Reality* that is within ourselves: quit the Shadow, seek the Reality,—this becomes the best of one's whole nature by and by.—For which reason, when I hear of my dear John getting into History, and writing Poetry, and on the whole worshipping and working in the real genuine Temple of Immensity, I will say to him *Euge!* Antæus-like, in the *air* one cannot thrive: "touch but with thy toe the surface, straightway thou art strong again!"—For the present I ask Antæus's pardon, and appeal to Antæus ten years hence; I see him clenching his fist at me for what I have said here,—which nevertheless is as true as Gospel! Fight away, thou Earth-born; only not with me, who am thy bottle-holder, and faithful, though thou spurnest my light.

No sheet ought to go to Bordeaux, less than half-filled with what is called *gossip-fractioncles* of Biography: which far excels any Speculation one can hope to hear. My sheet is unhappily

near done; and contains nothing but autobiography.—John Mill, as you perhaps know, is home again, in better health, still not in good. I saw him the day before yesterday; sitting desolate under an *Influenza* we all have. I on the whole see little of him. He toils greatly in his Review; sore bested with mismanaging Editors, Radical discrepancies, and so forth. . . . I love him much; as a friend *frozen within ice* for me! Mrs. Austin is making great noise in Corfu; giving balls, etc.: *à la bonne heure.* I have not seen Taylor for a long time: the last time I saw him was accidentally in the Strand two months ago; where we walked a while together. Solemn and true as ever. He inquired zealously after you: a solemn true man; whom I love much. There has been a critique of his *Statesman* in the *Edinburgh Review;* setting several things to rights on that head: it was by Spedding; I read some sentences of it, in your Father's Library, and thought it very rational and just. The *Statesman* is a Reality of its sort, and not a Cobweb; you may trample it a little through the kennels, and it will still subsist. Miss Fenwick is again here; suffering much from our eminently bad winter. Happy you at Belsito! This day, down at Chelsea, even, it is yellow all as ill-scoured brass; at noon, with three windows, hardly light enough: beyond Hyde-Park Corner, think what it must be,—Erebus, Nox and the great deep of gases, miasmata, soot and despair; bipeds of prey reduced to hunt by torch-light! Let us pity the poor white man.—I have seen your elder Brother; unhappily as yet only three times. He is the lovablest human creature, it seems to me, I have met for a long time. The present company always excepted! A man with much clearness, gentle lambent fire of humanity in him,—and not flying out like Aurora-Borealis or sheet-lightning; like some

persons I could name! On the whole I congratulate you on such a Brother;—and really could often wonder where you both came from; a couple of singular fellows in this world: born of the tornado! Anthony has your Father's eyes tho' black, and your voice; he was a strange beautiful vision to me.—My Wife is miserably ill to-day, the *third* day of headache and Influenza work. She can say nothing except "her love"; bids me say whatever I can for her. You are far out when you suppose she has given you up, or ever dreamt of that. Adieu, my dear Friend! write to me, and love me.

I am always,

Yours very truly indeed,

T. CARLYLE.

Mrs. Sterling must accept our Newyear's wishes, and get well, and better. Teddy also, and the one I shoed the doll for.*

Send me an old Bordeaux Newspaper when you cannot write. I think they come for a halfpenny.—I have seen Miss Martineau; Mrs. Butler, Miss Kemble that was: *nichts davon,*—except worship for the poor white woman!

LETTER 16

To Dr. Carlyle, Rome.

Chelsea, 17th February, 1837.

My dear Brother—. . . The grand news, of course, is as usual of this *Book.* The Printer Moyes goes on, very briskly, as you have heard, for the last week; but on the whole irregu-

* "Little Charlotte." See Carlyle's *Life of Sterling,* Pt. iii., chap. i.

larly hitherto; and makes less way than one could wish. I have been very heavy on him with *corrections;* but the worst of that is fairly over now. Fraser, resolute to *be out* at some set time (I know not what, probably April-Fool's Day) has set a second Printer to work on the third Volume: but of him, his type, etc., not being quite accurate, conformable to Moyes's, I have not yet had any *Proof.* We are got near the hot work; taking of the Bastille. I call each *Chapter* that was, a *Book,* and have subdivided all these into Chapters: the longest list of Chapters as yet is *ten,* the shortest *four.* Each Chapter has a *brief* (brief*est*) title; generally with something of the epigrammatic character in it; each Book too has a title; and each Volume: the list of them will be the *Table of Contents,* without other Index or appendage. The Notes are merely *references;* I do not add anything beyond the text. On the other hand, I am really conscientious in *cutting out;* you will be delighted to *miss* not a few of your old friends. I have added pieces too as I went on (through this *burnt* part); have *divided* many a paragraph, many a sentence; and so, with *chaptering* too, have let a great deal of *daylight* (of *blank* at least) into it: and, on the whole, it seems to myself, incredibly improved it. We shall see what the Doctor says, by and by!—My toil is great; but it is not a wearing toil, as that of writing was. As we get on, too, the references, which are the main toil when you have a conscience, get rarer: the MS. too is of a kindlier character, after we get out of the *ashes.* I find "on a general view" that the Book is one of the *savagest* written for several centuries: it is a Book written by a *wild man,* a man disunited from the fellowship of the world he lives in; looking King and beggar in the face with an indifference of brotherhood, an indifference of con-

tempt,—that is really very extraordinary in a respectable country. The critic of a respectable nature, cannot but be loud; *falls er nicht schweigt* [unless he says nothing], which really I shall be well content that he do. But I think he will not. In that case, I will grant him free scope: there is no word in his belly harder than the words *it* utters, by implication or directly, about him and his. A wild man;—pray God only it be *a man!* And then buff away; smite and spare not: the thing you can kill, I say always, deserves not to live.—Mill is clear for having a Review out *before* the Book come; and has solicited Proof-sheets: this not for the Book's sake, but his Review's. There seems to have been rather a loud dissonance (if I am to credit Fraser) about these two Papers I emitted lately;—great blame and also good praise is all I could pray for; if indeed any prayers pointed in that direction at all! But shall I not *be done with it?* That is a fact worth all the others. On the whole, I believe it is all right. Mill finds that "the *Mirabeau* has done us a great deal of good"; and wants continuance of favours. Were this *done,* I will see. Your plan about French Revolutionary Characters, I doubt, will not answer: there *are* only two or three *characters* (the rest being shadows and hearsays); then of these some are worn threadbare, others have no documents about them: and worst of all the *Revolution* is a subject I am sick of for the present. There are other subjects plenty, if I were in trim. . . .

The great business for me however is to *get well again.* Jane has decided that she will prefer staying here thro' the summer; so her Mother has been written to, to take up her abode with her; and I think will accede to the arrangement. . . .

As to *Lecturing,* I imagine it is almost off for this Season.

After much hithering and thithering, it was at last discovered about a week ago that the "Institution"* was all filled up and completed for the present year. I wrote to Miss Wilson (the main agent in this business) that the Institution, so far as I understood it, did make but little difference in the enterprise, what it offered and what it withheld being only *houseroom* and such like; that if she or other friends could find me forty or fifty human beings really desirous to know something about German Literature, I would with perfect promptitude actually open my mouth to them and tell them what I knew. Houseroom we could with all the ease in the world procure for ourselves. I have not seen her since; but she asks me to "come some evening." We shall see whether the thing is not *finished* at least. Next year, if I be here and in the same position, I really will try it. . . .†

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 17

To His Mother, Annan.

Chelsea, 18th February, 1837.

My dear Mother—On Monday last your Letter came, and along with it the inclosed from Rome: both of them you may

* The Royal Institution, Albemarle Street.

† Mr. Froude prints parts of this letter,—inaccurately as usual (*Life in London*, i. 95–6). Happily it is now no longer necessary to put any reader on his guard against Mr. Froude's version of anything he has printed. I do not intend therefore to continue the process of pointing out his errors. I need only remark for this once, and then drop the subject, that in citing from the above letter, he has (1), Quite altered the punctuation, capitals, and italicising; (2), omitted words and sentences without notification; (3), introduced marks of omission where he has omitted nothing; and (4), tacked on to the end of the letter several sentences that belong to another letter altogether.

guess how welcome. Yours was especially welcome: so wild and fatally unhealthy had the time been; and no news came from you, except James Aitken's *two strokes*, which served to assure us that nothing very far out of the due course had happened. Thanks to Heaven that you are still all safe! Now too when the Spring weather cannot be far off, we will hope this Influenza is about gone; and things may move a little more smoothly. We have had the ugliest weather here too: mud and fog and drizzle. But February begins now and then to look out *blue;* inexpressibly cheering to one: yesterday I went walking almost the whole day, in the sunshine, blessing Heaven that a New Year was born out of the winter blackness. Many have died; many in very sorrowful circumstances. The funeral bell never ceased *jowling* here for week after week: it was quite doleful to hear and see. Jane, as I told you seemed to be getting round when I wrote last; but she went out too early, and fell back again, and had to struggle on amid great coughing though not nearly so *sick* as the first time: she is now very nearly clear once more: and all looks better round us. I never took the malady; I have twice had flying whiffs of cold. . . .

Our printing gets forward here, not in the most regular way; yet gets forward. Sometimes they keep me busy, tumbling among all sorts of rubbish, broken pieces of paper, books, slips, ink and confusion,—really like a man *dighting** chaffy corn in a barn, for the whole blessed day: then again they will give me holiday for two days. I endeavour to conform "*owther*† way." But so does the Book *go on* at any rate; and comes out, like *dighted* corn, tho' only in *wecht*fuls, leaving cartloads

* Winnowing or sifting.

† Scottish for *either; c.f.* German *oder.*

of chaff and *earings*. I think it will not be so bad a *Book*, "after all, Mother." It is a Book at any rate that makes no *complaint* about itself; but steps out in a quite peaceable manner, hoping nothing, fearing nothing: indeed, I never knew till now on looking at it this second time, what a burly *torque* of a thing it was,—a perfect oak-clog, which all the hammers in the world will make no impression on. Of human things it is perhaps likest a kind of civilized *Andrew Bishop*, the old crier of ballads! The same invincible breadth of body; a shaggy smile on its face, and a depth of voice equal to that of Andrew! Many a man will find it a hard nut to crack. But it is *they* that have to crack it; happily not *I* any more.—We are hardly two-thirds through the first volume yet. It will be a Book of almost the same size and shape as *Wilhelm Meister;* but with more in it; the type smaller, the volumes too a little thicker. So it flounders on, you see, towards fulfilment. Fraser has set a *second* Printer to a new volume of it; being clear to have it "out in time": this second Printer has a good lump of manuscript, but has sent no printing yet.—Did I tell you they were printing a second edition of *Teufelsdröckh* in America? This one is to be a thousand copies; the first which was but five hundred, being all sold. It is really curious enough to see how things have to struggle in this world,—just as men have; and do struggle, and if there is any stuff in them do not struggle quite in vain. . . .

Jane has written to her Mother to come off hither so soon as the weather mends (in April perhaps), and stay with her through the summer: this is the arrangement that will suit her best; and I surely think Mrs. Welsh will come. As for me, I have resolved on the other hand thus far that I will not

spend next summer *here;* but go somewhere, where I can lie asleep and be forgotten and hidden from all persons, and on the whole well, extremely *well, let alone!* This is literally the thing that I feel will profit me above all others. I think I shall really be much *better,* both in mind and body, after this rough wrestle with the Book,—if I were once well rested. Now the question rises therefore: Whitherward to go? I have fixed nothing; it depends on Jack, on many things: but surely I think of Scotland and Scotsbrig among the first! If I come to Scotsbrig, I will do nothing but *ride,* and read a little; and speak no word to any man outside of those four walls. I am determined to be *well let alone.* Jamie shall have notice to buy me some sort of swift quadruped in good time;—not of the "dwarf cart-horse" sort. It shall go hard but I will see you. Two months more will show us better how it can be, and should be. . . .

But I must close this up: the sun is getting out in spite of a showery morning, and I ought to fare forth and take the good of it. Blessed sun! it is sent to all living; and the whole wealth of the Bank of England is not equal to a beam of it. We hope it will get the length of Annan too; I find our loud *wind* last week was loud with you as well. Finally these hideous wet-blankets of cloud-vapours must get away, and summer come back to us. . . .

And now with kind brotherly and filial affection to you all every one, I must lay down the pen. The Printer's devil (so they call the little Boy that comes and goes) will be here to-night with work, work! I ought to be *aired* and fresh.—You do not tell me how James Austin is getting on. I have no doubt, diligently, steadfastly; with what *luck* is not in one's

own power. Let us all keep a good heart; and go along stoutly, be the roads dry or dirty,—in God's name!—Farewell for this time, dear Mother and all of you! I am ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 18

To Alexander Carlyle, Hill, Annan.

Chelsea, 5 March, 1837.

My dear Brother—You can judge whether your last Letter produced an impression on me. I have thought of little else ever since I got it. From hour to hour the thought of what you tell me comes up, whenever there is any cessation of the huge bustle I am kept in: a thought sorrowful and stern, yet not without some kind of stern blessedness in it. You have not prospered in this our Home-land, tho' making a manful, long-continued effort to do it; you resolve that there are other lands where you may go and try anew. It is infinitely sad to me to remember how I was whirled away from your sight at Annan-foot last time we parted, and now—when we may meet next, God in His goodness only knows! But it beseems us to do what is needful to be done. Quietly however painfully we should do it. Nay, in America itself, I will still trust to see you; and what is more, under better circumstances than our wont was. Neither should our dear Mother grieve, nor will she, as those that have no hope. She knows that on this side of the Ocean as on that, nay in Death itself as well as in Life, we are all alike under God's eye: our kind thoughts too, can follow one another, constant, unimpeded, though our bodily footsteps cannot. My Mother too, may perhaps go to America

and the whole set of us root and branch! Far older Emigrants than she have gone. It is becoming a country this, which all quietly industrious poor and faithful men, ought, one would say, to be in haste to quit. No improvement in it, but the reverse and ever worse, down I doubt to mutual violence and killing, seems to be predicable.—Your resolution, painful to me as it may well be, is one that I dare not say *Give up.*

. . . For me it is determined that I am not to get to Scotland till June at soonest. That scheme of *Lecturing,* that I have mentioned more than once, is to take effect here! The people of the "Royal Institution" (a kind of sublime *Mechanics' Institute* for the upper classes) were "all filled up for this year," when my friends got the enquiry made: but I remarked, thereupon, that there was nothing in that,—"forty or fifty human beings wanting to hear about German Literature, and one human being ready to tell them somewhat about it: *this* is the soul and body of the business; we get house room anywhere we want, and are independent of all the Institutes in the world!" . . . They snatched at the saying, and have set about it with might and main; and a room is secured, and *books* are opened, and *tickets* printing, and the Marchioness of Lansdowne and a great quantity of Ladyships volunteer to come; and it is fixed for the first week of May; and all is going on like a house on fire! A kind of shudder runs through my whole heart when I think of it. However, it is a thing I have wanted and meant to try; and so now I will try it: and doubtless get through it better or worse. On the first week of May between, three and four, afternoon, two days each week, till my six Lectures are completed,—there are to be happily only six: this is the arrangement. I am to *speak* my Lectures (that

is the terror)! I have not a moment's time to write them. We must and will be through it; that is the short and the long!—

. . . Did you get the two little things (pamphlets) I sent you (by Glasgow, Templand and Dumfries)? There was one of each sort for you. The *Necklace* was the last thing I wrote at Puttock, or ever shall write.—James Aitken ought also to have got an American Review of *Teufelsdröckh;** which you will surely see and like: they are extremely good to me these Yankees, and I am a great object there.—

God be with you, and guide you whither it is right to go, my dear Brother! I remain now and ever,

Your faithful and affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 19

To Dr. Carlyle, Rome.

Chelsea, London, 21st March, 1837.

My dear Brother—Yesterday your welcome Letter came; two *Diarios* had come before; one of them the preceding week I had sent forward to our Mother, according to arrangement. I spread out my sheet last night with the purpose of answering without loss of a post; but just as I sat beginning, *rap* there came a Printer's devil, and *this* night, after a busy enough day, is the first leisure I have. . . . Poor Jane is sick again; I am here, alone with my *pipe.*

There was word from Annandale last week; a Letter from Jean. All was well there. . . . A few weeks before, I had

* See *post*, p. 65, n.

received a Letter from Alick. It is written in a mournful temper; and it is of a mournful tenor: poor Alick foiled everywhere in his attempts in this country, sees nothing for it, but "taking America in the Spring"; and wishes me to write to Mr. Greig * with that view. The message made me sad, as a message could; but I complied with it directly; and wrote back to Alick that I had done so, but that by no possibility could there come an answer before the end of April. I have not since heard a syllable of the business. Jean does not mention it; but indeed she seems to have been much in a hurry. Whether Alick will go this May or not I cannot know: the thing lay doleful in my head continually for two weeks; now lazy suggestions that perhaps he may put it off (which how can I *wish* him to do?) have come in as a kind of worthless consolation. I sincerely am sorry for the poor Boy; and have no doubt but his real field is America: yet clearly it is a stern problem for him to go. No heart that I have known has keener affections in it; and his Mother—and to go forever! It is a hard thing. May God give him and us all the strength to *do* whatsoever thing we are called to do!—Tom Clow † spoke of going with him, he said; and even Clow of Land, though only as an *explorator* he, to *see* whether it would do or not. Alick did not seem to have any notion of *two* journeys for his own share of it, but to contemplate going off direct. . . .

. . . The Book will struggle itself out towards the end of May. It is terribly troublesome; the references, above all: One sits up to the neck among rubbish of books, and clippings;

* A Scotchman who had emigrated to America and become a man of some wealth and importance there.

† Alick Carlyle's brother-in-law.

searching and searching. Moreover, it is growing far longer than I expected: the first vol. is 404 pages. I was afraid the two others would be much larger: but I think by management the third vol. at least will not differ by many pages from that: if the second prove a little larger, it can best bear it, so far as look goes. The third volume is the best. But on the whole I think the whole thing is not *naught*, and I have it there as a thing *done* by me. It will stand a great deal of *beating;* the critics are welcome to lay on; there is a kind of *Orson* life in it which they will not kill. Of course we were too late for being reviewed in Mill this time; a thing I bear with extreme philosophy. Mill's Review, I suppose is just coming out: he is printing that *Histoire Parlementaire* Article. . . .— Speaking of Reviews I must add one word about an American Review of *Teufelsdröckh* which I saw lately. It pleased me very much, tho' it would have been very vain to believe it all. It *was* here and there a kind of idealized image of me however, and had more true perception and appreciation than all the other critiques, laudations and vituperations I had seen of myself.* It is called *Christian Examiner* (I think), and Miss Martineau says, has great vogue in Yankeeland, their best Review. I bought a copy, and sent it to my Mother: it was three shillings, very dear. I will not treat you to one, but let you wait. Jamie Aitken expressly commissions one for himself: that is six shillings out of the family; more than the gear is worth.

But, alas, my dear Jack, I go wandering about the bush; loth to tell thee the grand news of all: that I *am* to lecture on German Literature, in May next! *Ach Gott!* It makes my

* The article, or review, was written by the Rev. N. L. Frothingham.

heart tremble when I think of it; but it is to be done. Royal Institution having failed, the Wilsons (it was Miss Wilson mainly) determined that we could get an audience of our own, and a Willis's Room of our own. So they have Tickets printed, and a "Book" open at Saunders and Ottley's, and the Marchioness of Lansdowne and honourable women have their names down, and Prospectuses circulate;—and, on the whole, on Monday the first of May from three to four o'clock, and five Lectures after that, two each week, I am to commence and speak! Heaven only knows what I shall say. There will not, with these dilatory Printers, be a single moment, devotable rightly to preparation. I feel as if I were to be flung overboard, and bid swim or drown. You will think of me that day, and wish me through when the hour comes.—On the whole however it is best. I have long wished to try that thing, and now it can be tried. Nay I am sure further that I can succeed in it with a fair chance. Courage! Swim or drown!—. . . This year we are in will possibly settle something as to me. I seem as if I were going to make what a servant of ours called "an *explosure* in the Kent Road, Ma'am." I am driven not to care two straws whether or not. Fortune has had me *aux abois* for a good while, and I have looked defiance in the teeth of her. The longer I live "fame" seems to me a more wretched *Kimmera* [chimera]; really and truly a thing to be shied, if it came: I think of Rousseau's case sometimes; and pray God I might be enabled to break whinstones rather, or cut peats, and maintain an *un*fevered heart. God keep us all, I pray again, from the madness of Popularity! I never knew one it did not *injure;* I have known strong men whom it killed.—The Printer's devil *is* here since the bottom of the

page. God bless thee my dear Brother; and good-night in thy far chamber! I will add margins to-morrow. T. C. . . .

LETTER 20

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, Monday, 27 March, 1837.

My dear Mother—Will you accept of the shortest Note I almost ever wrote to you; a longer at this time not being in my power?

The Printers are chasing me night and day; having now after long idling begun heartily to work. I toil from sun to sun keeping ahead of them: at this rate in some four weeks, *we are like to be done.* Done! O, what a blessing! Then, I *am* to Lecture: actually and bodily to make my appearance, and begin Lecturing on the first of May! . . . I in the interim cannot get a moment bestowed on the business for these Printer people. At the day appointed, nevertheless, I must make my appearance! The comfort is that I know something about the subject; and have a tongue in my head. One way or other, doubtless, I shall come through.

But, the thing that drives all this, and every other thing for the present out of my head is the state my poor Wifie is in. She has taken this Influenza for the *third* time. I really begin to be seriously uneasy for her. She has lain these six days, in great distress; with very little, sometimes with no sleep; coughing considerably; and her strength, with so much suffering this last year and indeed these last five years, is sore worn. My poor Goody! We have got a Doctor*; a skilful sort of man, I

* Dr. Morrah, of Sloane Street.

think; the Sterlings' Doctor: he looks grave about it; says that at present there is no alarm, but that we must *take care*. You can fancy me sitting up to the neck among books and papers; and hearing the sad cough on the other side of the wall!* I pray daily and hourly that the bitter north wind would become south and gentle. I believe it would set her up again for this time. It must come surely. I have sent for Mrs.Welsh to-day; or rather I have told her to be getting ready, and in any case to lay her account with coming speedily to us. Anne is as willing and kindly as creature could be: but we are bad nurses she and I. Mrs. Welsh will probably come very soon.—It is a great blessing that my own health stands out so well. I feel the nasty east-wind too, in the fretted state I am in; but still keep on my legs, and feel as if I needed nothing but *rest* to make me even better than I used to be. This is the state we are in; and I am, as it were, stealing the time it takes to tell you about it. Courage, courage! I shall at least have one weighty stone rolled off me: the good weather will be come and my poor Jane better a little. . . .

LETTER 21

To Dr. Carlyle, Rome.

Chelsea, 23rd April, 1837.

My dear Jack—. . . It was not so agreeable to hear that there was fainter chance of seeing you this Summer; indeed no chance for the Summer, and only a certain degree of

* Carlyle's study in those days was the room on the first floor, afterwards the drawing-room, and Mrs. Carlyle, being ill, was now occupying the bedroom immediately in rear of it.

chance for the Autumn. But who can say you did wrong? God knows there is little here to come to: Commercial crash coming on, spreading wider and wider; the Paupers of Manchester *helping themselves* out of shops, great bands of them parading with signals of want of bread! On the one hand, Miss Martineau and Secretary Chadwick celebrating their New Poor Law Bill as the miracle of recent Legislation; on the other, the poor Nottingham Peasant hanging all his four children and giving up himself to be hanged that they may not go to the Hunger-Tower of Dante, here called "*Bastille*," or Parish-Workhouse. It is a clatter of formulistic jargon, of quackery, cruelty and hunger, that my soul is sick of. *Hither*ward one need not hasten with what faculty he has: at the utmost one is bound to do the best he can *here*, being here.—No man in such a case can calculate the hour and the year; but to me it is very clear, all this cursed *pluister* of Lies and Misery is coming tumbling into incoherent ruin, and will grow a great deal more miserable than it ever was. Often enough I could long to be in sunny Italy, far away from such sights and sounds. We will wait patiently, with closed lips and open eyes, what the time will bring. If September bring us Jack, it will be well.

The best news for the present is that I have as good as done with printing,—yesterday only! Nay there are still some *Revises* of the Second Volume to deal with; but they are a light matter: all the rest stands hard and fast in type. I have had such a time of it as man seldom had: but, God be thanked, it is *done*. The Book will likely *succeed* a little, I think. But "*Deevil* may care" whether it succeed, or *de*ceed down even to *him;* I being now fairly rid of it, after an honest duty done to it. . . .

On the eighth day after this I am to make my appearance as a Lecturer! Heaven alone knows how that is to be got through. I have literally not yet had a moment's time to think about it. There is a partially free week for me now; and I must make use of that. The audience I suppose will be tolerably fair as to numbers, and certainly miscellaneous enough: do but take these three, Godefroi Cavaignac, the Marchioness of Lansdowne, and Henry Brougham (Lord Brougham and Vaux)! Some way or other we shall "welter through it"; then in four weeks hence, there will be a burden rolled off my shoulders; and I shall bound forth free.—By the bye, I continue to find Cavaignac a most true-hearted well-gifted, natural genuine wild man and Frenchman; on the whole, one of the best Brother men I fall in with here. He comes about once in the ten days; a wild proud man; who takes considerably to me. Were I happier I could love him considerably. His mother is here; half-distracted still by grief for her daughter: I have seen her twice; weeping, weeping, "*Ah, monsieur, c'est un mauvais esprit qui régit ce monde!*" It is in all senses miserable to look upon. . . . At Henry Taylor's one morning, I saw Sir Francis Head. It was a kind of reward of virtue. I had refused about four invitations from Taylor, who is always very good to me; this fifth I was, with an effort, minded to accept. . . . Head is the *Brunnen of Nassau* man, of whom you may have heard: a Navy Captain; about my own age or younger; a fine strong-built, blonde-locked, bluff, effectual Saxon-figure, of the right Bull character, in shag frock and trousers; clean, fresh, full of laughter, shrewdness, pepticity, heart and health. He seemed *rather* to consider me as of too pungent a genus, genus oil-of-vitriol or so; but I

saw well *he* was of good Old-Christian Buckinghamshire fat; and liked him well.

No more gossip; but swift, to needful news! Jane grew worse and worse after I wrote to you; for about a week she gave me a terrible fright. Coughing, coughing, weak as a sparrow; and no sleep to be had. We sent for a Doctor; the Sterlings' Doctor, one Morrah of Sloane Street, a "Surgeon, etc.," of fifty, an Ulster Irishman I think: he proved really helpful; administered some mixture that had turpentine in it; above all, sedulously inculcated good warm temperature, avoidances and observances, saved us "if not from disease yet from the bad Doctor." I had written to Mrs. Welsh: literally by return of Post she was *here*, one Saturday morning about six. The poor Goody was considered to be out of danger then, though still very weak. She has been *nursed* ever since; about a week ago she came out of her room first; she has now been twice out of doors, tho' with caution, as the weather improves: we consider this *third* fit of Influenza therefore to be past also. Morrah, I saw, dreaded consumption; the sound of the cough pleased him ill. He declared however, on ceasing his visits, which he did with great discretion when the time came for it, that there was nothing organic gone wrong; that it was the whole system weak, irritable, and requiring to be gently dealt with. If you fancy us in the middle of all this; with Printer's devils knocking, knocking; I myself sick—! But it is gone now. . . .

Be well and busy, good Brother! Thine ever affectionately,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 22

To Alexander Carlyle, Hill, Annan.

Chelsea, 23 April, 1837.

My dear Alick—. . . Jack's Letter, as you will find, treats a little about the American speculation. On the whole I think what he says about it is very rational. There is no reason why we should regard such a thing as a perpetual separation; none at all: nay it rather seems to me as if in reality more of us would have to see America yet; as if the more of us that wended thither it were the better. This country of England seems to me clearly enough to have a destiny before it of unknown degrees of blackness. There is a curse of God written upon the arrangements men live by in it. The fruitful land denies the toiling man food from it: *that* I make bold to assert in the face of all men, is a thing that neither can nor ought to continue. And quackery and dishonesty is in high places and in low: the voice of the quack speaks loud and louder. Let us in God's name leave it to *him;* let us *go out of it,* and fasten somewhere, were it at the Earth's end, on, not a quackery, but a *truth.* In America there is this great truth which the all-nourishing Earth tells a man, "Till me and thou shalt have sustenance from me."—On the whole, therefore, my dear Brother, I bid you be of courage, of good heart and hope, and do cheerfully and quietly what you find admonished and guided to do.

. . . As to the payment or surety you speak of, or as to anything whatever in that strain, I beg you will speak of it no more at all. It is distressing to me to hear of it. The

whole sum you had from me would be consumed rapidly; I not benefited, but left poor, how poor! Nay the truth is, I have less need of money far than has been long usual with me. I rather think I am at last going to get into the way of gaining a little money here; it really does seem possible; the rather perhaps as I have got into the way, of late, of regarding either that or the reverse of that with an equanimity unusual formerly. Many a time I have silently said within myself since I came here, "Well then, O world, or Devil, *reduce* me to a diet of potatoes, to any diet, or even to no diet at all; do it, I bid thee, do it; I will beat *thee* after all: it is not to thee that I will yield." —But to quit all this speculating, I wrote to John Greig* that I thought you would perhaps have £300, or so, to start with. A little money might save one great difficulties at the starting. Jack has cash he is not using; nay who knows but I too may have a little cash: one way or other, poor Dillock† shall and must be fitted out, if there be strength in us all to do it. . . .

This I think, my dear Brother, is the substance of what I can get said at present. I will write again, *when* I said; and then surely at more leisure. My affection to one and all, name by name. Good be with you ever!—I send as usual a printed leaf, one of the last: the next sending, one may hope, will be the Book itself.—Ever, dear Alick,

Your faithful Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

* See *ante*, p. 64, n.
† Alick.

LETTER 23

To His Mother, Dumfries.

Chelsea, London, 28th April, 1837.

My dear Mother—Yesterday Jean's Letter came to hand, with the good news in it that you were all struggling forward in the old way. A thing I was right glad to learn in that specific manner. I had received, some fortnight before, a Letter from Alick through Ben Nelson: Alick saw you at Annan on your way to your present quarters. I wrote to Alick last week; or rather it was *this* week, and the Letter is probably lying still at the Annan Post-office. As you are so *black-baised* * about me, I determine to send off a small word to-day to relieve you; till Alick come or send. Alick's Letter contained a Letter from Jack too, with nothing but good news in it; here likewise all is going right enough: therefore, dear Mother, let your *black-baisement* become a *white-baisement* with the smallest possible delay!

The printing is entirely done; I suppose the Book will be out before many days: however, I have washed my hands of it; and try as much as possible to forget that there is such a thing in existence. The very first opportunity I have, you need not doubt, I will send you off Copies of the wonderful performance; that you may read it in peace, and have done with all this clatter about it. . . .

Jane continues to go on very well; and gathers strength apace now that the wind has got itself round into the west. She goes out when the sun shines; taking care to keep on the

* Apprehensive of evil; depressed or abased.

sunny side of the pavement, and not to go far: in the evenings sometimes she will walk as far as Battersea Bridge, and to and fro upon it for a little while. It is very cheerful there, in these fine evenings; for the Bridge has only iron railing, being itself a Bridge of wood; and commands a free sunshiny prospect far and wide: the broad River gushing down or up according as the tide is, with barges and painted pleasure-craft, the green woody regions about Richmond on the one hand, stirring Chelsea with shops and wheel-vehicles enough, and the great whirlpool of London (like an ocean of confused steeples and *reek*) rising up on the other. Our advantage in the west wind is that all the *reek* is blown *from* us, not to us. Mrs. Welsh rather complains, of late days; but it seems nothing of moment. We hope the good weather will set everybody up again and everything.

. . . As for me and my health, it is really all well enough with me. I lie quite quiet, and have the greatest appetite in the world to *do nothing at all.* On Monday at three o'clock comes my first Lecture; but I mean to take it as coolly as possible: it is neither death nor men's lives whether I speak well or speak ill, or even decline to speak at all, and do nothing but *gasp.* One of my friends was inquiring about it lately. I told him, some days I could speak abundantly, and cared nothing about it; at other times I felt as if when the Monday came, the natural speech for me would be this: "Good Christians, it has become impossible for me to talk to you about German or any Literature or terrestrial thing; one request only I have to make, that you would be kind enough to cover me under a tub for the next six weeks; and to go your ways all with my blessing!" This were a *result* well worth remark-

ing. But it is not likely to be *this*.—We are very much astonished where Anne Cook* got her ideas about the Lectures. "Two thousand tickets" would really be a pretty thing; the *twentieth* part of that will satisfy us tolerably.—On the whole, dear Mother, fear nothing! I will send you word about this Lecture-business too, "that I have got through it." One great blessing is that *in three weeks* it *must* be done one way or another. It will be over *then*, and all well.

Jane who is sitting by me, sends her affectionate regards and thanks to you and Jean and the rest. She says she will write to you by and by on her own footing; but is for the present *black-baised* like yourself!—. . . Good be with you all! I think I shall get a frank for this: you cannot get it before Monday at any rate. Dear Mother ever yours,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 24

From His Mother.

Annan, 23 May, 1837.

My dear Son—I was glad to learn by the *Times* newspaper that you had got the first of your Lectures honourably done. I wept and read it again and again. I hope they are finished by this time, and you are preparing for coming home to see us soon. I came down from Dumfries last Thursday, bringing the long-looked-for Books with me which we had received the Tuesday before. I found them all in confusion: Alick preparing for America which I cannot think of almost on any account. . . .

We are all in our usual health which we ought to be thankful

* The servant at Cheyne Row, who came from Annan.

for. We had word from Manchester last week: they were very well also. Jamie Austin and Mary are talking of going up to Carstammon to see his friends; he has not been there since William's burial, and is not thrang [busy] at this time.

I got the Review of *Sartor*, which I approve of very much. I had it short time, as I sent it to Mrs. Welsh, and she being hurried away, did not get it sent down again. Alick and the rest are all anxious to see it, which I hope they will by and by.

So it seems we are not to see the Doctor till the back-end [of the year] at soonest; which is perhaps as well, as situations are ill to be had. Give him my best wishes when you write; tell him to send me a letter soon and to be very minute.

I find myself in bad fettle for writing, so I will say nothing more at this time, as I hope to see you soon face to face.—I forgot to tell you that old Pool is dead.

Your own Mother,

M. C.

P. S.—I think some time back your Goody promised me a letter: mind her on.—Say to Anne Cook her people are all well; her mother wishes her to write.

LETTER 25

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 27 May, 1837.

My dear Mother—Your Letter reached me yesterday an hour or two before I went off to deliver my last German Lecture. I had written the week before a Letter to you at Jean's, Dumfries, a short scrawl, which perhaps you might receive and be

reading just about the same hour. It was calculated to be in Dumfries on the Wednesday; and doubtless Jean would find some way of forwarding it. In the interim this fresh Epistle from Jack had come; testifying once more that all is well with him. I will now with such speed as is possible write you a line by way of winding up all these things.

Your brief expressions about Alick and yourself are full of sorrow, and go into my very heart for both of you. What can be done? Courage, my dear Mother; let us all pluck up a heart equal to the difficulty; the whole difficulty then is as good as done. One must have courage, and in the strength of the Giver of Strength dare and do what is fit and appointed. . . . But in good sooth my notion is that farming and all other industry in honesty is ruined in this Country till some great black sea of troubles and uproar have been crossed; that bad days are in store for peaceable men here. It is a land suffering as under a curse at present; that greatest curse, that of a *lying spirit*, has been put into the mouths and hearts of its people; a false lying spirit, not a true one, turn where you will! I question greatly whether the far wisest thing we could do were not to rise all as a family, you still the head of us, my dear Mother, in spite of your years, and go *out of it*. Beyond all doubt or cavil the man that is willing to work in America is sure of fair recompense for it. All evidence, of this colour or the other, goes to prove that at least. For those that are to leave families behind them in this England, it is a sad outlook.

. . . People have interrupted me, and my time is quite run without saying anything. My Lectures are ended honourably; let us thank God for it! It is perhaps the beginning of better things for me. I have gained some £135 or so by it.

. . . Adieu, dear Mother: they are talking to me even while I write. I must positively end. Good be with you all every one. Your ever affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 26

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 11th June, 1837.

My dear Mother—I make no doubt but you are wearying much to hear from me, what I am about, what I mean to do. My last Letter was hardly intelligible; written in much haste and confusion. I send you a short word to-day; it need not be a long one, as I hope to see you face to face so soon.

Ever since I wrote, I have been as idle as a man need be. The Garden is all dug and cleared, the bushes all pruned; I lie about on chairs and sofas, reading harmless books, or stroll out among the green hedges; and rest as well as I can. On the whole, I am better than I could expect. The late and cool summer too, suits me, if it suit nothing else; we have moisture, we have wind; so long as that will last, this is a very good summer place for me, and my natural laziness has recommended me to lie still. Now, dear Mother, I think the hot weather is coming: in that case, I must actually bestir myself, and get under way. . . .

My next Letter to you I hope will be a short one, somewhere from the north of England; announcing which day I shall come. You can keep asking [at the Post Office] from time to time. I hope to land safe at Annan Waterfoot, and see you all safe.

Jane goes on very well here, and gathers strength in the

good weather. One would call her quite as well as usual; which is rather surprising, considering the state she was in not many months ago. Her Mother is to stay with her till I come back; unless a journey to me in Scotland should grow to seem advisable.—I will bring a Book or two with me; I hope Jamie has some kind of quadruped, dwarf cart-horse or other; I mean to lie hidden from all the world, and not speak above three or four words in a day!

There is still no Letter from America, nor do I know certainly when one is to be looked for. What Alick has done with himself in the interim I often guess; but shall probably make out nothing till I see him with my eyes. . . . Tell him to possess his soul in calmness, there is still no danger of him, if he stand true to himself: nothing is ever desperate for a man, nay he knows not whether it is even calamitous and not a blessing in disguise, so long as his own heart and his own head have not deserted him. . . .

I might scribble away, my dear Mother, for a long time, and throw light or no-light on many things: but the essential thing seems to have been said, That I am coming home to you soon, and shall explain all by word of mouth. My pen too is very bad, and I ought to be out in the air. Farewell then my dear Mother; I hope, for only a little while! Jane's love is for you all and sundry, as mine is. I rejoice greatly in the blessed prospect of summer days and kind friends.

Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

If I do not get a frank readily, I will strip this off and send the enclosure by Post.—They say, by the bye, we are soon to

get a *Penny Postage* for all British Letters whatsoever! It will be a mighty improvement for all and sundry.

The King is by many said to be dying, here; dropsy in the heart. Poor old fellow, I saw him about a fortnight ago, coming in from Windsor through Hyde Park: he looked fresh and decent; clean as from spring water. The little boys cried: "Ha, old Billy, how d'ye do?" The Queen they say is in very bad health too. The last hope of the Tories at present is like to go out with "old Billy."

LETTER 27

To His Wife, Great Malvern.

Scotsbrig, 18 Augt. 1837.

My good Wife—If I seem dilatory in writing, it is but appearance, not reality: this is literally the first possibility I have had since your new address got hither. The Government Frank came as fast as it could; greatly to the quieting of my anxieties; after which I waited in sure hope. On Monday morning last I set out on a journey, too long delayed, to Dumfries and Templand. Passing through the Village on my galloway, Postie there and then handed me out the Malvern Letter; a Letter from your Mother earnestly encouraging my Templand expedition; finally a Newspaper seemingly directed in Goody's hand too, but marked ominously with red ink, with a huge brown seal, and the charge of some five shillings and odd. This latter I declined; the two former I accepted, and set to reading in the bright sunny morning, heedless of men. Your Mother's was despatched in few paces; but Goody's served me ambling along in alternate sunshine and shadow of trees

till I was fairly over Hoddam Bridge. A blithe man it made me; for the poor little Lassie seemed really to be enjoying her travels, and did not, as was too apt to be her wont, "ride through the country with her eye fixed merely on the apron of the gig." "She can write a grand Letter when she likes," said my Mother, last night when I read it over to her on my return. The former account I had got of the feckless waefulness attendant on packing and departing dwelt sad within me; it is such a counterpart of what I have felt so often, or rather do always of late feel: one is ashamed to claim pity, and yet one could *greet* for very misery, and might deserve to be prayed for in all churches. The nerves of man are a fearful piece of machinery.—Not till last night at ten o'clock, wearied fordone and the saddest man in all Scotland, did I get to any table where an inkstand and ten minutes of composure might be mine. This morning (steeped to the heart in nauseous Doctor's stuff, *Ach Gott!*) I write as I can. My galloway was small, of violent temper and no breeding; I had awakened, on my Templand night, at three in the morning, on my Dumfries ones at five each, and had to fight my way home again out of the kindnesses of those people with the suspicion resting on me that I was a kind of churl. The old grey walls of Scotsbrig rose tranquil from amid the green branches from the babble of the "caudron," * in the moonshine and silence last night; and my Mother's candle was burning in the front window: it seemed all a *vision*, fast very fast departing; but it was beautiful to me; I shall not be long behind it. O Jane, O my Jane!

. . . I cannot here estimate my new capabilities, or

* Cauldron, at the foot of a little waterfall in the stream near Scotsbrig.

what even approximately my position in London may now be. With eyes lifted up, no longer fettered to a desk and sheet of a Book, one must look round and try to ascertain. Life always there is for the living; someway or other we shall get lived: my ambition restricts itself to that. If an Angel were to descend with all the crowns and laurel-garlands that ever girt the heads of Adam's sinful posterity in the one hand, and in the other an offer of Peace, the power to be at Peace,—"O Angel," I would say, "Keep thy garlands, let me, were it as a breaker of whinstones, have peace!" Enough of this.

I have had no Letters that you have not sent, except a short one from Mill, and a long one from John. Mill writes to ask me for an old Letter of his about Carrel and Paris; which Letter, I replied, was unattainable, being in your keeping, and you gone to Malvern. He is busy writing a Book "on Logic"; and seems anxious for my verdict in favour of the enterprise. Write surely, since thou hast a mind to write: that is the rule. He says in reference to Thackeray's Article,* which he attributes to Sterling, it will get me many new readers: *esto!* By the bye, this Article did us all some good here. It was a sunny Monday morning; Alick had been up here, Jamie and I were escorting him homewards: daily for above a week had the little messenger flown to the Post-office without any effect at all; what was Goody about, why was there no tidings or token? Lo, on the top of the Potter Knowe (the height immediately behind Middlebie), Betty Smeal unfastening her luggage; presenting two Newspapers with their strokes in Goody's hand; one of which was this *Times!* They made me take place under the shade of the hedge and beech-trees, and read it all over to

* A review of the *French Revolution* in the *Times*.

them, amid considerable laughter and applause. One is obliged to men in these circumstances, who say even with bluster and platitude greater than Thackeray's, Behold this man is not an ass.—I wrote to Cavaignac; I think his Letter very sprightly and unsound; but I do value the man as among the manfullest I know. John Sterling's Letter you doubtless read? An inarticulate blast of music: your criticism of his Life and way of doing seemed to me very just. But there is more hope of him now; hope of his *living*, which includes all other hope for him. My Brother John's long Letter held out no prospect of his return in September. . . . Alick here has resolved at last on opening a shop in Ecclefechan, in my Mother's main house in that village. It is a forlorn prospect; but I cannot say to him it is not the *best*. Some hundreds of thousands in this country this year, as I learn too indubitably, have not known for ten months past what it is to be satisfied with food. The condition of the lower classes is frightful, and we have mere *Io-pæans* on the Poor Law. I am sorrier for no man than for Alick; but hope still of him: the face he shows is even *good*, considering all.

As for thee, my poor Goody, sole possession that I have in the world, close-knit to me tho' so cruelly separated,—do thou, my little dear, take all care of thyself, and be well and hopeful when we meet again. Enjoy Malvern while it is good; the second day after it has grown tiresome, take coach and go home. Have the house swept for me; I think I will soon meet thee there. September is supportable in London, at least the end of it. At all events it were as well we met soon now. If too hot, we might run over to Boulogne on our own account? Write directly, so soon as there is any distinct prediction to be

made. I wish I were near thee, O I wish—I wish—many things. Write any way, directly. I can no farther: my soul and my body are alike sick to-day. Adieu dear Wife! Keep a good heart: be sincerely cheerful when there is real fun; sincerely sad when the misery is real. Sad is serious, the beginning of insight, of conduct. God be with thee, my Own.*

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 28

To Dr. Carlyle, Rome.

Chelsea, 21st Sepr., 1837.

My dear Brother—Your Letter to Jane, dated 4th Sepr., arrived here yesterday; the one to my Mother was likewise duly received and read by me at Ecclefechan. The latter was pierced through in two places, and appeared to have been fumigated; the Chelsea one of yesterday had escaped that formality. Communication being so obstructed, I lose not a day's time in sending my answer. You have me here with the top of the morning, in my old up-stairs establishment; I will tell you everything that I can call to mind.

That cholera business seems to be a frightful one; the cholera itself, and then the precautions against it, and panic on account of it. Men are great blockheads and very miserable. Your last Letter is the true emblem of a country suffering dreadfully by Heaven's visitation, and still more by its own folly and frenzy. We remember well enough how it was in Dumfriesshire, yet with this difference in our favour, that village was not

* For Mrs. Carlyle's reply to the above letter see "New Letters and Memorials," i. 61-7.

shut against village, and we had only the madness of Fear in an isolated inorganic shape. God preserve you, my dear Brother, in the middle of these perils! As I used to say for myself, Are we not at all times *near* to Death; separated from it by a mere film? God will preserve us till our days and their work are done: therefore at least we will not live in bondage to the vile tyranny of Fear. Expose not yourself without duty to do; that is very clear: but with duty again, one will dread no exposure. And for the rest, hope and let us all hope, that it will quickly pass. As for you, you had a call to go thither where you now are: the distinct call to go and seek your daily bread. As for the rest of your party, that, flying about at their will, have flown into the throat of such a danger,—what can one do or say but pity them, but help them with all the faculty one has? Would to Heaven it were well over for you all! I will not send this last Letter of yours to my Mother but only some general abstract of it, drawn in my own way: she gets terror enough out of the Newspapers; in which no horrors of Palermo, no massacre of an Englishman at Rome, is omitted. I will write to her to-day or to-morrow; and say that you were still well, that she must trust to Heaven for you still. But on the whole do not neglect, as you prescribe for us, to write and convey us assurance by all methods. How much were a weekly Newspaper worth at present! But we cannot get it; we must go on as we can without it: I will keep up what obstinate trust I can that nothing has befallen. And so no more of cholera.

I continued at Scotsbrig till Wednesday gone a week (this is Thursday); much in the old way till the last. Nothing had gone wrong or had altered notably. . . . My stay in Man-

chester was of some thirty hours: on the Friday night I got safe into the inside of a coach (the same you came in), and with less flurry than usual, arrived here by omnibus, next night to tea; finding all clean and tight, a fire burning, and Jane hid behind the outer door to welcome me. I had been absent twelve weeks and some days.

So ends my travels' history for this season. I must gather myself together now, and see what I will do. There is surely more possibility for me than there was. Much has improved since my departure: yet unhappily there is one chief thing not right, my poor Jane's health. She had taken slightly to coughing again, ten days before I came; a phenomenon that saddened me much. Had there been no cholera in Italy, I think I should almost have urged her to go and try it. As it is, she [shows no] cowardice, no despondency; we will do the best we can, and hope all things. I myself believe she is really grown stronger since we parted; this cough too has abated very visibly since my return. Having no *Book* to write this year, I shall not feel so fretted, shall not fret any one: there will be a cheerfuller household than of old. What I am to do,—except clean the garden in the first place? Mill wants me to write him an Article on Walter Scott; most probably I shall do that: there is no promise in it, but also no prohibition: it will bring a few pounds into my pocket, and my hand in again. They are very desirous to have me write; but their Review is a most barren one, neither are they themselves fruitful. Seemingly my best money resource will be in new Lectures in the Spring season. To this I will sedulously turn myself, to see what is practicable, in good time. Meanwhile I am to be considered as a kind of successful man. The poor Book has done me real service; and

in very truth has been abundantly reviewed and talked about and belauded: far more than I had any expectation of. Neither apparently, is it yet done. There is last week a very high-toned thing in the *Examiner*, which I have joyfully sent off to my Mother; I will also try to get you a copy: the joy one has in the pleasure one's friends will have to read such things is the only legitimate joy belonging to them. Did you get the *Times* review I sent? There were since then three (very shallow, laudatory) articles in the *Glasgow Argus* that I saw; several others that I heard of: on the whole, a well-received Book; handsomely off one's hands; thank Heaven! . . . Jane is down stairs, sewing table-covers, not much troubled to-day; some Mrs. Crawford is to come and give her a drive in the sunshine: perhaps she may write you her own salutation. Now a Letter with the soonest. Adieu dear Brother; may God keep you!— Your ever affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 29

To His Mother, at Salford, Manchester:

Chelsea, 22nd Sepr. 1837.

My dear Mother—It is yet hardly a week since we parted, and I am sending you a Letter: I know very well it will be welcome at any time; and my hand being still unoccupied with regular work, nay still more a Letter having just arrived from Rome, what better can I do than write even now this morning before setting to anything else?

There are no franks at present; therefore I cannot send you Jack's Letter, but must content myself with a summary. On the whole indeed I may almost say there is nothing what-

ever in it except what we heard at Ecclefechan, together with the new assurance that our good Doctor still continues well and hearty, and is eagerly desirous to have me write to him. It is addressed to Jane here; the Doctor not knowing for certain whether I should have arrived yet. They have sad work with the cholera, especially with the absurd measures taken by his Holiness *against* the cholera. You would see in the *Examiner* perhaps, how a young man was massacred by the mob at Rome on suspicion of his meaning to poison the people and *infect* them with this pestilence! Jack mentions the same anecdote; and adds that there is not a village but is shut up each against intercourse with the others; guards at the gate; strangers refused admittance; and all the natural hubbub, ignorant panic and confusion one can so well fancy in such a case. The best is, Jack is himself in good heart, with his whole party; and of opinion that the misery is past the worst. The weather he says is grown cooler, and not likely to be so hot again. They have *no* cholera where he is in Albano; and suffer only from the stupidity and panic of the people, being restricted in their drives to the immediate neighbourhood of their own village. We must hope the best, dear Mother; and that the misery will pass soon, without hurt to those we love. . . . We may calculate on some five weeks before we hear from him again: if aught were to go wrong, of course we should hear of it directly. We must trust always in One that has preserved us long.

That Friday night after leaving you all, we went prosperously on, with occasional showers; finally with a bright moonshiny night, through pleasant country; the coach sometimes left altogether to myself, then occasionally filled for a stage or two, but never so as to crush one. On the whole I got along

with less suffering than usual; and was landed safely at the door next night between five and six; Jane waiting for me behind the door, and soon getting tea ready. . . . My news are not great hitherto: I found all well but one thing, the health of my poor Goody. She has a little cough again for the last ten days; not much, but yet far more than I want. It seems to abate perceptibly since I came back, and I think will ere long disappear; but it is an ill omen for commencing the winter with; it must lead us to take double and treble care, and first of all to let nothing fail for want of *flannel*. She is in good heart otherwise, and I do think on the whole stouter than when I went. . . . Jane was very proud of her umbrella;* and says it is a thing "to make one almost long for a rain to put it up in." I told her of the attempted purchase of dressing-gowns, and made her laugh at the failure. As for my *shoes*, dear Mother, do not vex your heart another instant about them. I find the old ones can be soled again and will serve another year: nay the List-shoes themselves are so thick and warm there is hardly need of any other.—As to myself, I am hardly out of the fever of my travels yet; but as I said the road did me less ill than usual; and were I once at work again, I shall be strong enough for anything required of me. Mill's people are wanting me much to give them an Article on Walter Scott: I have no great appetite for that, yet know not but I may do it; something or other I shall certainly fall to soon. But the Lectures, I suppose, will be the thing; I ought to make ready for *them*. Meanwhile I find John Sterling here, and many friends; all kinder each than the other to me; with talk and locomotion the days pass cheerfully till I rest, and

* A present from Carlyle's mother.

gird myself together again. They make a great talk about the Book; which seems to have succeeded in a far higher degree than I looked for. I have not got to Fraser yet to hear what his report is; but everybody is astonished at every other body's being pleased with this wonderful performance! . . . Alas, dear Mother, I was interrupted at the top of the second page (at great length by John Sterling), and it is now clearly too late for this day's post! I will keep the sheet till to-morrow, and then finish. Jane says she will then write a postscript herself. Good night then, my dear Mother. Oh me, how many things I would say, and have nothing but a miserable scrap to say them on! May the good Father, who knows all hearts, keep you always and comfort you in all your wayfarings! We shall meet, if it be His will, and not part again.

T. C.

P. S. by Mrs. Carlyle—My dear Mother,—You know the saying "it is not lost what a friend gets"; and in the present case it must comfort you for losing him. Moreover you have others behind, and I have only him, only him in the whole wide world to love me and take care of me, poor little wretch that I am. Not but what numbers of people love me after their fashion far better than I deserve; but then *his* fashion is so different from all these and seems alone to suit the sort of crotchety creature that I am.—Thank you then, for having in the first place been kind enough to produce him into this world, and for having in the second place made him scholar enough to recognize my various excellencies, and for having in the last place sent him back to me again to stand by me in this cruel east wind. God bless you all.—If I am not strong enough this winter to go out in the rain I will make a slight drizzle with

the shower-bath and stand under it with my fine new umbrella.—I will write you a letter all to yourself before long, God willing.

J. W. C.

LETTER 30

To His Mother, Salford, Manchester.

Chelsea, 9th October, 1837.

My dear Mother—A second Letter has arrived from Jack, with better tidings rather than the last. A Newspaper came about ten days ago, and was forwarded to you; I knew not very well whether you would understand what it meant, but fancied you might make out the date and *three* strokes, and so sent it. Jack, in this new Letter, not only reports himself still well, but confirms the account we otherwise have *that the cholera at Rome is abating.* The main mischief they still labour under seems to be the absurd notions and practices of the people in regard to it. But these of course will abate too, with the cause of them; and by next Letter we will trust in all thankfulness to learn that the peril is altogether over. The two Letters both together have little in them beyond what the Ecclefechan one had, and their new dates and new successive assurance that our poor Doctor is well. I hope to get a frank to-day; and so will send them that you may read.

I wrote to Jamie at Scotsbrig last week about sending us some butter and meal. Except the address of the Newspaper from Dumfries, I on my side have not had the slightest scrape of a pen out of Scotland. I study to keep hoping that all is well. I will beg *you* however to get an old Newspaper of *any* kind, directly on your receiving this, and address it to me,

either yourself or Jenny and you; adding two strokes if the truth will permit: it will be a great satisfaction to me, till once you get the length of writing. The *Examiner* back again will serve, if you have no other paper ready.

As for us we go on very quietly; not worse certainly than we were. It has taken me most of this time to *heft* myself again to my new *gang*,* so wondrous is the change from Scotsbrig hither; I have *written* nothing yet; neither indeed am I in haste to begin so long as I can help it; my poor wearied nerves are really, I believe, better employed *idling* than in any other way while they still can. However the Life of Scott has now actually got the length of my table here; I must read it carefully over, and then *see!* People all say "How very much better you look!" It is a way they have of talking; which I do not mind much: the grand improvement I trace is that of being far *calmer* than I was; the immense *fuff* having subsided into composure. It is a blessed change.—With respect to Jane, she is and must continue very weakly; but precaution will maintain her in a tolerable state: she has determined not to go out at all except in the middle of the day through winter; and then oftener to *drive* than to walk. Friends with carriages are ready enough to second her when she likes; or at worst, one can have six miles of driving in an omnibus for a shilling. She sleeps a good deal better, she says, since I came; the cough I spoke of is nearly altogether gone: on the whole I find her improved; and will hopefully aid her to do the best she can. We heard from Mrs. Welsh, very briefly; Mrs. Crichton of Dabton, who was ill while I staid with you, is dead: all was now solitary at Templand, and unoccupied save with that.

* To accustom myself to my new surroundings.

I have seen most of my friends that are here; a good many are still roving about the country. All people are very good to me. Doubt not, dear Mother, I shall be able to do better now. I am better known now; have a far better chance. My Book has been abundantly reviewed, praised and discussed; Fraser also tells me it is steadfastly making way, imparting itself from hand to hand, and on the whole doing well: I may really say I have got handsomely rid of it. You saw the *Examiner* Articles doubtless; I think it will now be little matter whether they review it farther or not: reviewing they say does almost no good except in the way of announcing; the Book as Fraser says, has hitherto "made its *own* way." By way of final treat however, if it is to be final, I enclose you this copy of a Letter which came yesterday from an unknown Quakeress* near Liverpool; a very singular epistle: Jane will not let the original go, so takes the trouble of copying to save it. Do you not call that a warm reception? Also I must mention a strange half-daft Edinburgh gentleman that called here last week to congratulate: he however went upon the old Article *Characteristics;* and *illustrified* us at a great rate; an elder of the kirk; brimful of religion; a very queer man indeed. At bottom I fancy you, dear Mother, apprehensive now that we shall err in the *other* way, that it will "*take hal' o' thee, Tom.*" No fear, no fear at all! When one is turned of forty, and has almost twenty years of stomach-disease to draw upon, there is great safety as to that. A voice from the interior of the liver cries out too sternly "what's ta use on't?"

The best news is, that I have actually got, and do now wear,

* Miss Phœbe Chorley. The letter is printed in *Letters and Memorials*, i. 88–90.

a pair of carpet-shoes exactly of the sort you were seeking for me! Therefore seek you no more; except a pair of them for yourself. They are of black shag cloth, with three buttons, soft as wool; warm, light and comfortable beyond anything I have ever had on of that kind. They cost but some five and sixpence a pair out of the shops; mine were nine shillings, being made to order, and of a much larger size, the generality being for women only. They are just the old snow-boots, without cork sole. Get a pair of them, dear Mother; I wish you to do it; and wear them within doors and without in the winter time.

Has Alick been with you? What is he, what are all of them, and you to begin with, doing? Jamie's harvest must be happily over; the weather has been excellent. I wish Alick would write; he must write.

And what "picture" is this? Dear Mother, it is to buy you a little keg of ale, and some warm things through the winter. The money that I gave you last you gave wholly away again, or almost wholly; it is a thing totally absurd: I beg you to accept this, and I insist upon it; and write me when you next take up the pen, not useless speech [of thanks], but an account of all the warm clothing and furnishings Jenny and you have laid in by my order. A supply of ale I must insist on your getting when you go home again. Also I think you must rather go in the inside of the coach than by the steamer. It will be too cold and rough so late in the year.—. . .

May good and that only be with you all always!

I am ever my dear Mother's affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 31

To Dr. Carlyle, Rome.

Chelsea, 7 November, 1837.

My dear Brother—We have received some three *Diarios*, two of them within the last ten days; likewise a Letter addressed to Jane, then a Letter to myself, both of which were forwarded to our Mother; and now finally there came yesterday a new more deliberate Letter to me, much longed for: whereupon I proceed without delay to answer. The *Diarios* cost only one penny, and will even as I believe travel afterwards to Annandale gratis; we are always right glad to see them. I send them to our Mother (who now understands what they mean) generally the same day. The one with the three strokes, indicating that you are settled one way or another, will be specially welcome. We are all tolerably well, and you are all tolerably well; God be thanked for it: I hasten to communicate so much.

You have had a doleful confused time, in the midst of perils and distractions, such as we could easily conceive; it was very good of you never to let us be long without some token or tidings; and now we will rejoice the more that the hurlyburly is about over, and things returning to the old course again. May the dulness of it never more be relieved in *that* way! Danger of death is something, but the madness of mortals under base panic, storming round one, is more insupportable than any danger. We had a report here last week that cholera was in London too; but the news did not take; indeed Cockneydom is too *busy* to yield lightly to panic: so now it has been ascer-

From the painting by G. F. Watts. 1868

THOMAS CARLYLE, ÆT. 73.

tained that there *is no* cholera "in Limehouse" or elsewhere, but singular good-health for the season! Cholera, as I used to tell the gabbling blockheads, holds nothing in it that the pitifullest catarrh, the fall of a roof-tile, the breakdown of a hackney-coach may not hold: *Death*, that is the utmost the crash of the whole solar and stellar system could bring on us; and to that we have been used six thousand years now, or nearly so. For the rest, we will honour the Jesuit and other poor Priests; and pity Monsignores and the "Holiness of our Lord," to whom the faith of a common Russian soldier seems not to have been vouchsafed in this instance. But it was so at Dumfries too; only one clergyman durst enter their horror of a Hospital there, and he was an old Roman Catholic; Walter Dunlop carried it at length so far that he ventured on praying through the window,—with or without benefit. Well ended is well. . . .

But we must to London now. Jane is decidedly better; this is the best news we have. Her cough has been gone these three or four weeks; she takes all manner of care, intends not to go out at all in the evening; has got a warm red-tartan dressing-gown for the room, fur-tippet for the street: on the whole, by means of such precaution and the quietest life we can give her, there is a prospect that she may get over this winter better than she has done any of the late ones. Irritability of temperament, general weakness; this, and no specific affection of any organ, seems to be her ailment. She reads, sews, writes a little, and does tolerably enough, the best she can. For myself there is little to be bragged of, but yet nothing specially to be complained of. I feel a great change in me, accomplished and going on; a state of humour in many points new, unnamed; of which in its present state it is above all

unpleasant and useless to *speak*. My life is full of sadness, streaked with wild gleamings of a very strange joy; but habitually sad enough. The dead seem as much my companions as the living; death as much present with me as life. The only wise thing I can do is to *hold my tongue* and see what will come of it. In regard to *temporals*, I believe if I had these two, Health and Impudence, I might make great way here; but having neither of them, one sees not so well how it will be. One knows not which may be *best*. Alas, I trace in myself such a devilish disposition on many sides, such abysses of self-conceit, disgust and insatiability, I think many times it were better and safer I were kept *always* sunk, pinched in the ice of poverty and obscurity, till Death quietly received me, and I were at rest! If you call this hypochondriacal, consider the unutterable discrepancy that lies in these two facts: a man becoming notable as a light or rush-light of his generation, and possessed of resources to serve him three or four months, without so much as an outlook beyond! I suppose I shall have to lecture again in Spring; God knows on what; no blessing in the world were dearer to me than that of being allowed to hold my peace now for a twelvemonth. If I had wings I would fly to Italy, I think, I would fly to Saturn; *some*whither where I could be let alone. And yet, dear Jack, through all this black welter of sorrow and imbecility there is verily one glance of improvement very generally discernible: the deep, settled, invincible determination I have to *be at rest*. In my saddest moment, I say, Well then we shall go to ruin, to death if thou wilt; but we will not rage about it, we will *rest*, there will be rest *then*. I hope, and really almost believe, there is the beginning of new life for me in this symptom, which is a deep and genuine

one. But O, why do I *talk* of all this, even to thee? The day is foggy too, and I have a kind of cold, and in one ear a kind of deafness, extremely new and disagreeable to me. It will, as heretofore, prove far better than we think.

In this mood, you may readily conjecture, I am not working much. I am reading, I am running about; as yet *doing* nothing. There is a feeling in me that I ought to do nothing. Work, with the pen, is always as a fever to me; this I shun with a sort of shudder. Mill's Walter Scott stands on its basis yet; or rather *has* come to an alternative, which I daily wait for the decision of. After great soliciting on the one side, opposed by deep reluctance, indifference and even disgust on the other, I about a week ago wrote to Mill asking How much he would give me for contributing to him *for a year?* He has not yet answered; being at Brighton, being probably at a loss what to answer. If he say £200 (which will keep me living for a year), I will start not only with Scott but with a great many other things, despicable as they mostly seem to me; if he say *less*, I will respond *A la bonne heure* then; and let his Radical and all manner of Periodical business take its own course for me. Starvation *without it* is at least better than with it, the beggarly *pluister* that it is. So I wait Mill's answer really *unbeschreiblich ruhig* [indescribably calm]. Radicalism, as professed by that sort of men, does little but disgust me; vain jangling, godless self-conceit, the spirit of a most barren delusion. Besides, in another point of view, I believe Lecturing, were I once girded up to it exclusively, has a far greater capability in it now, very much greater; also if I ever *write* again, I may do far better than sell my alcohol for small-beer by the Periodical gallon-measure in that way! So, it shall be *either* way, my Boy; and

we will stand well prepared for it. There is better stuff in me still than a *French Revolution*, if I have life to bring it out. *Festina lente!* We shall see. Meanwhile I get *praise* enough, if that will do; Fraser says the Book is "moving, moving": I suppose it has a long way to move yet, and that he has many copies; but I never asked him, indeed I rather avoid speaking or even thinking about that business. The only real indisputable blessing I have got out of it is to *be* done with it, in very deed done with it, never to be tortured with *it* more! Nay I ought to add another blessing and benefit to the extent of about five pounds sterling: Macready the Manager of Covent Garden, a classical man wishing to banish the wild beasts and gather "Intellect" round him, has most unexpectedly sent me too a Free admission for the season; and I go some once a week hitherto to see some Shakespear notability or the like; really not without some enjoyment: last night we had *Macbeth*, deeply impressive in some parts, totally distracted in others. I skip the Farce and get home about eleven. Macready is a mixture of Robert Welsh, Dr. Thom and John Kemble; a wild rough sincerity is in him, really a kind of genius; I hope to know the man personally yet.—Oh Jack, why is the paper so near done! I wish thou wert here again for I have millions of things to say. Also I shall be a better Boy against that time. . . . I finish here, my dear Brother, with my brotherly blessing, with hope of good news from you soon. Whether you practise or not I shall not care much, so you feel well and busy. Never mind these hypochondrias of *mine;* at bottom, nothing wrong. Jane, sitting behind me reading, sends you her love. May God keep you, and give you all good! Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 32.

To Dr. Carlyle, Rome.

Chelsea, 12th December, 1837.

My dear Brother—. . . At the time I wrote last, there was a question about Mill and Articles: Mill called almost the next day, and at great length unfolded his pecuniary position with regard to that Review; which Molesworth, after spending some thousands on it, quits altogether in April next, leaving it in Mill's keeping; not in a very solvent state. Many of the Articles *must* be gratis: from me an Article *every other No.* would be most acceptable, etc., etc.: in short, it was quite clear that here lay no bread for me; hardly salt to my bread. Meanwhile poor Mill looked dolefully anxious that I should not desert him. In brief, I answered next day that I *would* do that *Scott*, and leave the rest hanging. To work therefore: and so *Scott* is done (on Wednesday night last); and they profess great satisfaction with it; and—it will bring me in somewhat like fifty pounds; that is the only use of it. I have been "sharp" on Scott, but "mannerly"; condemnatory, commiseratory, not irreverent. I wrote in great chagrin and plague; my deaf ear made as if the half of my head had been wooden; catarrhs, November fogs like Erebus:—but in short, it is *done;* and my nerves are coming back to their old tone again. Whether anything and what thing more I shall do for them is uncertain, is indifferent to me. . . . But one of the most conclusive literary signs I have met with for years occurred last week: James Fraser sent for me to propose printing *Teufelsdröckh*

and my scattered Review Articles, etc., in volumes! Not so long ago, all this was far as the North Pole from James's ideas. He shrieked literally at the very hint of it. And now he is willing, nay eager; there even seemed to lie *money* in him, if I could bring it out. No Review-puff whatsoever can come up to this. Well, I said I would consider it; and so having considered it, and taken counsel about it with my Goody, with Miss Martineau (a very shrewd creature) and made up my mind, I yesterday wrote Fraser that there were, including *Teufelsdröckh*, some Five sufficient volumes of those things; that he should have a 750 edition of them on paying me down fifty pounds per volume *baar;* on not paying it, not. This is the thing I alluded to as likely to settle itself if I waited a day or two. My notion of the probabilities is that Fraser will *boggle*, will refuse; and that therefore the thing will drop for the present: yet one cannot say. At all events, I feel decidedly as if there were no good for me in printing any more without money; being a thoroughly wearied, half-killed man (as Mrs. Jeffrey would say) "I have no *wish* to print." Under fifty pounds a volume, I simply will not plague myself with it at present. Miss Martineau is *importing Teufelsdröckh* from America by the fifty, by the five-and-twenty: if my repute will not spread to such extent that I can get a little victual while correcting the press, why then in Heaven's name it may take its own way,—and I also will take mine. There is nothing I am thankfuller for than to feel myself pretty well assured that neither the staying out of "fame," nor still more the coming of it, in any quantity, can at this time of day do me much mischief. The liveliest image of Hell-on-Earth that I can form to myself is that of a poor bladder of a creature blown up by popular wind; and bound to keep himself

blown, under pain of torment very severe, and *with* torment all the while and the cracking to pieces of all good that was in him! I have looked on this close at hand; and do shudder at it as *the sternest* doom that can befal a son of Adam. Let me break stones on the highway rather, and be in my own heart *at peace!* It is this that I reckon to be the great reward of my fierce fight of these latter years; I do feel peaceabler, and with a peace not dependent on other men or outward things but on myself: God be thanked for it, and make it grow!—There is still talk about Lecturing; which probably I *shall* have to try again. Some (Henry Taylor for one) will have it to be on the French Revolution: a very ticklish subject! Others vote for German again. I myself sometimes dream of a series of Literary characters, Homer, Virgil, Dante, Shakespear, Cervantes, Voltaire, etc. Ah me, I have no wish but to be silent;—not to have my nerves "*dadded a' abreed*" [scattered all abroad] again! We shall see. I have never yet, in truth, got it steadily looked at.—But see how the sheet goes! I must escape from myself and this class of topics. . . .

Did you see poor James Johnstone's* death in the Paper? I had never heard of it, and have not yet heard much more; he had been ill for a while; he has left one child. Poor James! No innocenter man lived in the world.' John Minto is dead, Mother tells me; his wife Kate was lying dead when I left that country; it was a tragical house with poverty and sorrow: how could one *live* if it were not for Death? *Der ernste Freund!*— . . . Better days are perhaps beginning for us all. A great comfort I have had in thee, for one: otherwise, many a time, the Earth had seemed as good as vacant, not one mortal creat-

* Carlyle's early school-friend and correspondent.

ure in it that could give me any help. One should be thankful to Heaven for a Brother.—People all ask for you, in fit time; I have no room to specify them. Jane still is not here. Write without delay that you can help. Take my love and brotherly blessing. Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 33

To Alexander Carlyle, Ecclefechan.

Chelsea, 10th January, 1838.

My dear Brother—We received very thankfully your kind, quaint and cheery Letter, recording your establishment in the new way of life at Ecclefechan. It was doubly welcome, as we had got no news of you, of any distinctness, till it came. You seem to be doing as well as one could expect for the time. "There is a dub at the end of every town," says the Proverb, "and a *loch* at the end of this." In fact one great doctrine everywhere inculcated among men is this, The necessity of *cheerful perseverance.* The *brawest* new coat we get from the tailor sits not easy at first. We must wear it a while, and then it begins to be easy. I like very well the humour you seem to be in. Joyfulness of hope cannot well be looked for at our time of life, and after so many bitter mistakes it is enough if one can compose himself, and with quiet diligence endeavour to make his task do for him.—Well; you must just persevere there, studying in all ways what will really advance your undertaking, not much disappointed if you see little fruit for a while, by and by you will begin to see fruit. Nay, it seems, your profits already do about suffice to meet your household outlay: this,

I think, is great work. It is few trades that will do as much for a man in these days. I have seen many men's trades, including those of statesmen, orators and high-famed persons; and it seems to me the longer I live, the trades of *all* men look more and more alike: the happiest of all men I think is he who can keep himself the *quietest*. Be of good cheer then, my dear Brother; and go heartily along there, thinking your task as good as any task, so it be followed faithfully. I will hope to find you quietly progressive when I come back to Annandale; not making any shine, for that is not necessary to the son of Adam, nor good for him; but jogging along, in more and more tranquility of mind, making day and way somewhat alike, among your *bairns* and other blessings; growing always the quieter the older you grow. One of the chief things I look towards in increasing age is that of getting quieter. Allan Cunningham tells me "a man never gets healthy till he is five-and-forty!" That surely is rare news.

Jack, twice over, in his Letters, has insisted much on the necessity of your applying yourself to penmanship in your leisure hours. I report his counsel; and really think it will be worth your while. The main thing you have to aim at is getting to write *fast*, and with ease. You have the elements already of a very sufficient hand: *throw it out*, I would say; you will find yourself get along better and better. There is nothing else in the world but *practice*, continued practice, that will teach any one to write. . . . Why man, if you had a free flowing hand, and were perfectly *sicker* * in the spelling, who knows what all you might write! I have seen a man with less natural wit, do—I will not say what.

* *Scottice* for sure.

The only other thing I will say about Ecclefechan at present, is to hope that the poor little Bairn whom I remember well is not coughing any more. Get flannel for her and the rest, poor little objects, keep them warm, and be kind to them; they will be a blessing to you yet. Jane I find is a speller; that is right: she is a cleverish lass, or I am mistaken. Tom also must arouse his somewhat sleepy faculty;—or on the whole, he is perhaps just as wise to keep himself quiet for the present. To them and their Mother and all of you, we send our best New-year; and pray, as poor Irving used to do, "May the worst of our years be *past.*"

As to London and me, there is little stirring since I wrote last. I persist in my old determination to be at rest. I will be a quieter man, tho' all the Devils should tempt me otherwise. This I fancy is the main conquest I have made after all; and a great conquest I do find it to be. For the rest, things all go successfully enough. I hear some inklings of a *second edition* of the Book;* a thing which I suppose will come, tho' one cannot well say when, for our Fraser will now have money to pay. Before this time twelve-month, we will say. Did I mention to you last time how Fraser and I were on terms about reprinting my Review Articles, etc., in a collected form? Well: after some meditation, I demanded £50 a volume from him; he, poor soul, one of the cowardliest of men, durst not say Yes, durst hardly say No: looked very miserable; he has since then fallen sick, and so the matter hangs. My own fixed resolution is that I will either be paid, or have the blessedness of lying idle at least. Of that alternative no man can hinder me. But observe, with regard to those same "Articles," an American

* *French Revolution.*

just now applies to me, thro' Miss Martineau, for a list of them that he may get them published *there!* It will be "profitable," he says; which Miss M. assures me, "means 500 dollars:" "he is a wealthy young Lawyer, of great worth," who makes the proposal. Be this as it may, I have sent the man a List of my writings (with a correction or two); and think the chance is I shall really have the satisfaction of sending you a copy by and by—from Yankeeland first. It is all right and more; I used to think they *might* print these things perhaps after my death; but this is a better proposal than that.—By the bye, a man in the *Times* Newspaper, for the last ten days, is writing diligently a series of Papers called "Old England" extravagantly in my manner; so that several friends actually thought it was I! I did not see them till last night; and had a loud laugh over them then. It is that dog Thackeray (my Reviewer in the *Times;* you remember the Potter Knowe);* he, I am persuaded and no other: I take it as a help and compliment in these circumstances; and bid it welcome so far as it will go.—There are to be Lectures; but Heaven as yet knows on what.

But see, the bottom of the sheet! We have the sternest frost since three days ago, after weather of a brightness and mildness equal to Italy. We must take it as it comes. Jane keeps wonderfully well, does not cough at all; she is writing here to Mary, and bids me send her kind love by this conveyance too. I inclose you my last letter from Manchester; which gives all the news I have of Jack yet: I have had a Newspaper with two strokes from him since, nothing more. He is well seemingly. I end here.

* Height near Ecclefechan, where Carlyle read aloud to his brothers Thackeray's Review of the *French Revolution*. See *ante*, p. 83.

LETTER 34

To Dr. Carlyle, Rome.

Chelsea, 1st February, 1838.

My dear Brother—. . . Nothing has occurred since I wrote last, at least nothing bad. . . . Our horrid Frost is off during these four days; succeeded by blackness of fogs, by bitterness of east winds. Jane nevertheless holds out in good order, chiefly by dint of keeping herself quiet and in the house. I too am about as well as usual; my main complaint is a huge head of hair, which I cannot get cropt till the weather grow warmer. Were it not for the tyranny of fashion, I would bind it all back, tie it in a knot behind, and never crop it more, whistling at all barbers for ever thenceforth. We live very quiet, fewer visitors than usual in the fierce weather: more especially as the Frenchmen have now gone all elsewhither,—Marrast wedded, to one unknown to us; Cavaignac busy writing a Book and preparing for an Irish tour; Garnier invisible; Pepoli lecturing at Brighton. Henry Taylor comes down once in the six weeks; mainly to talk about my lectures. Mrs. Sterling is confined to her house by weak health; the *Stimabile* is not confined, but dare not come too often; . . . A mad whirlwind of potbellied absurdities; yet with such a *vitality* in him as always does one a kind of good to see. . . .

One of the most entirely uninteresting men of genius that I can meet with in society is poor Maurice to me. All twisted, screwed, wiredrawn; with such a restless sensitiveness: the uttermost inability to let Nature have fair play with him! I

do not remember that a word ever came from him betokening clear recognition or healthy free sympathy with any thing. One must really let him alone; till the prayers one does always offer for him (pure-hearted, earnest, humane creature as he is) begin to take *effect*. Did you ever see Thomas Erskine (*Evidence* Erskine, Laird, Advocate, etc.), the Scotch Saint? I have seen him several times lately, and like him as one would do a draught of sweet rustic *mead* served in cut glasses and silver tray. One of the gentlest, kindliest, best-bred of men. He talks greatly about "Symbols" and other *Teufelsdröckhiana;* seems not disinclined to *let* the Christian Religion pass for a kind of Mythus, provided men can retain the spirit of it well. Likewise I have seen Scott,* Edward Irving's Scott; a man much sobered now, tho' not at the end of his fermentations yet: who, for one thing, "has read the *French Revolution* four times over, every word of it!" What think you of that? He lives at Woolwich, and lectures twice weekly to thirteen persons, the rich portion of whom maintain him for doing it. He has a good laugh in him; and brings one in mind of several good things. On the whole, I take up my old love for the Saints. No class of persons can be found in this country with as much humanity in them; nay, with as much tolerance as the better sort of them have. The tolerance of others is but doubt and indifference; touch the thing they do believe in and value, their own selfconceit, and they are rattlesnakes then! Most of the Saint people have been brought into our sphere by a couple called "the Wedgwoods"; Mrs. Wedgwood a daughter of Sir J. Macintosh, Mr. Wedgwood a Police-Magistrate,—who has lately renounced his situation, accepted poverty, and retired to

* Rev. Alexander Scott, who had been assistant to Ed. Irving.

the Country, owing to some scruples about administering oaths. We regret them considerably; as do several others. One Erasmus Darwin, a Grandson of the great Darwin,* is a friend of theirs; comes often here,—driving his cab; an Italian, German travelling University sort of man, who "*keeps a cab*," if you know what that means: a very polite, good, quiet man.—At this point *enter* visibly Miss Martineau with ear-trumpet, muff and cloak, who has sat talking for an hour and half in her deft Unitarian-Poetic way; and left us, my hand all thrown *out!* Let me close this head of method therefore. We still see the Wilsons; Church-of-England Gigmanism of the aversest sort, held to us only by a strange love of *me*, and the need one has of friends. Mill, Radicality and Company, stay much in the background at present; being indeed all in a state of confusion; splitting up into sections, into waste wayfaring parties, each more purblind than another. They are very keen not to lose me from their Review; yet as they cannot *have* me either, to any purpose, we will sit lightly by that. Hunt is in the sere and yellow leaf; has not been seen here above once since my return.

It seems to be settled that I am to Lecture in May or April; subject as yet entirely indeterminate. My daily study of Dante for the present shuts it much out of my head. I feel in general that there are people ready to listen; that, under certain conditions I might have abundance to say; that the circumstances must if possible be *ascertained;* which nothing but time and *trying of them* will do. I read Dante as I say; hope to give a sharp Lecture on him for one. Poor Fraser still lies invisible, struggling I fear for life; nothing about printing or reprinting

* Erasmus Darwin (1731–1802), physician and poet, author of the "Botanic Garden," &c.

to be handled of there. I understand the Review Articles to be on the way towards publication in New England. Yesterday I had a Letter of [late] date from Emerson,* who had made a bargain about republishing the *French Revolution* there *for my behoof:* it "was to be out at Christmas"; so I suppose they are fairly reading it now. Very strange if my first payment for this Work should reach me out of Yankeeland, as possibly enough it may do! Under these circumstances I lead a strange dreamy *daunering* life at present; in general not a little relieved and quieted; yet with all the old features of Burton's *Melancholic Man,* to-day full of peaceable joy (ah no, not peaceable entirely, there is a *black* looks through it still!), then to-morrow for no assignable cause sunk into sadness and despondency. But verily the Book has done me great good. It is like a load of fire burning my heart, which by Heaven's favour I have got thrown out of me. I feel as if in some quiet place, with bread to eat, with books to idle over, and a horse to keep me tolerably peptic, I could live in singular tranquility for a good many years now. Nay even in my blackest despondencies, when utter Obstruction and Extinction seems to threaten me, I say, Well, it shall take my life, but my quiescence it shall spare! . . . London I could live in, had I something to live with; though I do not see that I could ever *choose* it as a place to live in. My feeling of domestication in it does not seem in the least to increase; there is little or nothing I could not leave in it to-morrow morning with dry eyes; much that I should rejoice to leave: its soot, for instance, its dust and *glar,* its tumult, quackery, dupery and loud inanity; ah me, one would sing *Te Deum* on leaving all that. Yet I can stay here. We shall see.

* Letter xviii., *Correspondence of Carlyle and Emerson,* i. 135.

The distinguished female has entirely consumed my time; and I had thoughts of going into the City; to get *Scott* reduced into *cash*, among other purposes: £45 is all they have given me draft for; really it is enough. At any rate I must finish *here*. You will write of course the very first hour you have. I hope a Newspaper in the interim. Jane sits by me, reading *Fraser's Magazine;* sends love and assurance that she has been borne through the winter "with an honourable throughbearing." Enjoy your beautiful Italian Spring. Bring as many beautiful Pictures home with you in your head as you can. In your head; that is the only place where you can *possess* them; and truly I find they are a great possession there; much more delightful than while one is *acquiring* them. Read books; but above all things speak and walk. Is Boisserée gone? I had a Book, etc., sent me from one Varnhagen von Ense of Berlin; whom I answered. Bunsen doubtless knows him. A stout literary soldier; full of Goethe: partially obsolete to me. Well, write instantly, and let us hope for good news. Adieu, dear Brother; good and peace be always with you!—

Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 35

To Dr. Carlyle, Rome.

Chelsea, 9th March, 1838.

My dear Brother—. . . So it seems you have only the *first* volume yet, the other two lingering no man knows where! I wish you could have read and digested them before you got home; you will probably have some kicking against the pricks

to go through before you can reconcile yourself; yet reconcilement is probable at last. The third volume is generally the favourite: I clearly think either of the two much less unhappy than the first. They are past and gone; that is the beauty of them. No Book or thing, I hope, shall ever throw me into such a ferment;—from the miseries of which I still, like one tempest-tossed and shipwrecked, am slowly recovering. . . . As to the Article-printing with Fraser, I imagine with you that I have probably done wrong: I followed other judgement than my own; then Fraser fell sick; at any rate I am in such a weak mood that I abhor bargain-making, am fit for no transaction with a greedy mortal about money. It is very weak; but it is true, and cannot for the time be helped. As for Fraser he seems to be clearly getting better again; by and by we shall likely resume the subject; and either with him, or with some other, the Article Collection will be got out. I confess I want it done; I want to have the whole trash once fairly off my hand; that I might betake me to fresh fields; that I might consider then what quite new thing I would try writing, or whether anything more at all in the world. The edition of the *French Revolution* as I conjecture must be nearly done, and there will probably be another; but my soul (poor soul!) shrinks from speech of such a thing with Fraser. *Quiet disgust*, that is the usual least unsatisfactory mood I am in about such things. The heart of man that has not tried it, cannot understand what a business all that is. Yet, blessed be God, there is a kind of light-gleam in the inner-man of one; which whoso will quietly, humbly, silently follow, it shall be well with him. "Silently" above all;—why therefore do I now speak? In a word, O brother Jack, I do endeavour to thank Heaven for

much mercy to me on this side also; yes, these long years of martyrdom, and misery which I would not suffer again to buy the world, were not utterly in vain; there is hope also, sure hope, that the worst of them are over. My mood of mind at present is not nearly so wretched: I am *wae*, very *wae* and sad, but entirely peaceable, and such sadness seems almost as good as joy. My heart's prayer is, Deliver me, ye Supreme Powers, from Self-conceit, oh do,—and then what else is *your* will!

That is a beautiful project of meeting you at Paris; but alas, my dear Boy, it is impossible. Know in one word: I shall be lecturing, like a lion, at that very date of time! It is all settled now: there is to be a course of Lectures, twelve in number, to begin with the first of May, and go on three a week. Wilson and Darwin are busy: yesterday, no farther back, the room was secured; a regular Lecture-room this time; all seated, covered with faded red baize; a decent enough place, in Edward Street, Portman Square, where some Mary-le-bonne Institution or other has its sessions: they have given it to us for the twelve times for twenty guineas. It will hold conveniently from four hundred downwards; a hundred and fifty will not look miserable in it, for it is of amphitheatral shape. Our hour as before is from three to four. Pity me on the first of May! And the subject? Aye, the subject, for which we must contrive some *fit* name (Henry Taylor giving counsel in that), is called as yet "On the History of Literature";* it means, The most remarkable Books, Persons, Opinions of our Western world, from the time of Homer downwards, so far as a poor ignorant man

* This course was finally called, "On the History of Literature, or the Successive Periods of European Culture."

can endeavour to get up some sincere utterance about them in Twelve most limited Discourses. The Greeks, the Romans, the Crusades, Dante and Italians, the Spanish and Cervantes, then Luther, Voltaire, etc., perhaps to Shakespear and Samuel Johnson. I tremble to think of it; yet endeavour not to tremble. I shall be in better plight this year; I think also of getting a Horse to ride about on from the middle of April; if I had any measure of health and pluck I could do very well. Happily we are out of Willis's Rooms and his dancers and brass-bands, this year; they think some of the fashionables will be deterred by our ultra-mundane position (in Portman Square district); but, in that case, we shall be as well without *them*, I think. No fewer than four Principalities, last year, came and heard me, and did not to this hour pay the fee! We are to charge *two* guineas this year; I cannot conjecture what audience there will be: we must try. Perhaps some £200 may be made of it, or so; there is as to money no other resource very visible for me here. Try it therefore in Heaven's name!—So you see, Doctor, you may probably get in before the death, if your Lady keeps her purpose, and hear a Lecture or two. *Then*, O then, right merry shall we hope to be, with the brave summer lying all manageable and free before us! I must work like a Turk however till the time come; I have nothing else to think of till then. Courage! *Espérance!* And now enough of this subject; which you will put together into "harmonious composure" by your own quiet reflexion, more quiet than mine is at present. I wish I had *three* sheets!

We are pretty well in health; Jane never coughing yet, beginning now to venture out when the day is favourable. She seems to me better than she has been for several winters.

I go little out at night, when I can help it: all dinners, all soirees are a malison to me. I was at Spring Rice's once, Chancellor of the Exchequer's! His sons and daughters were hearers of mine. They asked me a second time to their "at Home"; I was absent (out at Windsor for a day with poor Edgworth who had still persisted in that strange pursuit of his that I should "come and stay with him"), I did not go to the second "at Home"; and now, as I learn, there is some *hitch* in the business, owing to misconstruction of my absence, or I know not what: small matter; for my poor head and nerves did not recover the last entertainment for eight-and-forty [hours] after. I dined very lately with one Erskine (of the "Evidences of the Christian Religion"), a mild benevolent man of fifty, one of the best of men! I seem to be getting among the Saints so-called, the better of them love me much. Woolwich Scott was of our party, a respectable character: he is delivering a gratis course of Lectures at Exeter Hall "on God's methods of revealing himself," even now; very fluent, very honest-looking, to me not instructive. I went to the first, partly on compulsion; once or so I shall have to go again. Erskine is to be here, with Dunn probably, on Monday night. For the rest, what party is *so good* as reading Thucydides, Dante or Johannes von Müller? A mixture of both is needful, but the solitary evenings are the best. Cavaignac and Erskine met one night; and, beautiful to see, fell in love with one another! Enough now. John Sterling still writes in *Blackwood* "Crystals from a Cavern." The news from him is not quite so good of late, yet still not alarming; you will probably find him returned to this country about the time you yourself get hither. Of Mill I see almost nothing: he and his Review are taking a course apart from

mine; not a prosperous one, as I predict: *they* must forward, as I must. William Fraser has never played *pip* since I saw him in Autumn, nor do I hear any whisper of him. I conclude with real pity that matters go crossly with him: . . . Allan Cunningham was here on Sunday last; large and bald. I have not a square-inch more, dear Jack but must say farewell, all but the margin. . . . God bless you, my dear Brother!

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 36

To His Mother, Manchester.

Chelsea, 10th April, 1838.

My dear Mother—. . . The Annandale Letter* will wait for you till you arrive there. It contained no news, except that we were holding on much as usual, only Jane's health a little threatening. The cold March weather set her coughing again. But happily all that is past now, and she is as strong at least as before, and able to get out now when the day is favourable. I had enclosed you a Letter from my American friend Emerson; showing how he had reprinted the *French Revolution* in America, with skilful arrangements, and hoped to gain for me some £150 by the job. A very kind man. Since that I have actually received a copy of the American Book (in two fine volumes), and a pretty book it is: if the "seven hundred dollars" come too, it will be something! Emerson says they had already sold 500 copies; that the young people were in raptures, the old "shaking their heads," in short that it was *all right* there. They have the Review Articles printed

* A letter to his mother sent to Scotsbrig, she being still at Manchester.

too, I suppose, by this time; from which also I am to hope dollars. On this side of the water too, I must say, the Book business continues to prosper as well as I could hope: grand compliments, etc., from this one and that one;—unfortunately no money yet visible. Patience, Patience; I believe it must turn to something at last. . . . By the Note which I enclose you will see that a certain worthy Thomas Erskine proposes that a friend of his should help me in that business of bargain-making with Booksellers: I have several good friends here. This Erskine, I think I mentioned in the Scotsbrig Letter which you never saw, is a Scotch gentleman of fortune; famed in the religious world for books he has written and things he has done; who says (consider *that!*) "he does not know but Carlyle is more orthodox than any of them!" We like him very much, as everybody does. He was here last night; but is going to the Continent soon, his home in the North having grown too sad for him, sisters and mother and so many dear friends having been called away by death within the last two years.—Enough now about Books. The Poet Southey, one of the chief men of England, was here last week; and left word among his friends that he meant to read the F. R. *six times.* I said there were compliments enough and to spare. *What's ta use on't?* . . .

LETTER 37

To His Mother, Manchester.

Chelsea, Thursday, 12 April, 1838.

My dear Mother—. . . This is the crowded season here; such dinnering and *partying*, dancing and deraying, as it is

weariness to think of! The kind of creature they call "a lion" goes about every day and night into such meetings to be stared at. I go out not once in the ten days, and I find it far too much. "Never am better," as old Tom White said, "than when there's not a drop of it in me!" I have refused this little Member* I am going to to-night, and again refused him; till at last I must go,—and dine at seven o'clock!

My Lectures are to be vehemently set about to-morrow morning. To-day I have been writing to Jack; talking to foolish visitors, for poor Jane has taken a headache, and been in bed ever since noon. It is now between five and six and she is not better.

Yesterday, going through one of the Parks, I saw the [illegible] little Queen. She was in an open carriage, preceded by [illegible] or four Scarlet red-coated troopers; all off for Windsor just as I happened to pass. Another carriage or carriages followed with [illegible] honour, etc.; the whole drove very fast. I record it as the poor little Queen was a bit modest, nice young [illegible] lassie; blue eyes, light hair, fine white skin; of extremely small stature: she looked timid, anxious, almost frightened; for the people looked at her in perfect silence; one old liveryman alone touched his hat to her: I was heartily sorry for the poor bairn,—tho' perhaps she might have said as Parson Swan did, "*Greet* [weep] not for me brethren; for verily, yea verily, I greet not for mysel'." It is a strange thing to look at the fashion of this world!

. . . I insert here one of the Lecture Prospectuses: you will see what a thing it is! I must *warsle* [wrestle] through it. Above all things, above all things, I must try to keep myself

* R. M. Milnes, the late Lord Houghton.

quiet. I should like well to be on Creca Moor at present!—Speaking of Creca, they have let Craigenputtock again, to Macadam, whose offer was the best. Our house stands vacant, I understand. I sometimes think I shall go and hide there for a while.

But enough, dear Mother: my time is out and my paper. My love to all of you. Be as snug as you can. Take care of yourself. I am ever your affectionate son,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 38

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

[illegible] you, excellent little imp that he is: but you contrive to draw me, in rude hard lines, a very significant and distinct image of what is going on: many, many thanks to you for it. I had another Letter from Alick not very long before: he too is still unanswered; perhaps I should have written to him rather; but you will convey my news to him, some way or other; and I think this is more certain of being delivered directly than a Letter to him would be. I know too that you will all excuse me at present: my brevity, nay my silence altogether would not be inexcusable if you saw how I am situated.—I sent off your Letter and Alick's to our Mother in a parcel of Magazines and old trash of books going to Manchester: I have just bought a

Times Newspaper to speed off to her to-day, and shall have to write thither also before long. You too I hope will see some glimpse of some Newspaper; I will try to send you, or get you something of the kind sent, at least once before this thing of Lecturing be over. But, indeed, as Corrie said, "What's ta use on't?"

. . . And now for Chelsea and London. After much *trembling* and preparation, yesterday our first Lecture was actually got delivered. The *Times* I spoke of above contains a very kind notice of it (written, I understand, by the man* who reviewed my Book there): I fancy my Mother will send it forward to some of you and that you will all see it. I wish it could be kept for me; it and the rest that may follow; they will be worth looking at ten years hence: but on the whole that is no matter.—Our entrance into the enterprise was, as usual, performed under *mixed* auspices. My health, or rather I should say my nerves and heart were not good: tremble, tremble, like an ague fever, now hot with hope, oftenest cold with fear, and on the whole extremely sour many times that I was bound to *be* so shivered and quivered when all I prayed for was a life of quietness, of silence! To worsen the matter, poor Jane caught this Influenza that is going here, and after escaping all Winter and Spring much better than we could have hoped, fell ill and very ill just three days before the grand Business was to begin! Thank Heaven, she got as suddenly round again, and even got herself smuggled away yesterday, and in a private manner heard me preach. It was not so bad as last year; nor perhaps so good. I was very quiet; kept my tremblings down; and in the sick state I was in my mind felt

* Thackeray.

half lame,—like a spavined horse which I did *not* whip into heat. We shall be in many moods yet, before the "six weeks" end. But I suppose the thing *will* be got over in some tolerable way; and that is all I request of Heaven about it. . . .

Nothing could be friendlier than my reception; I have kind friends here, whom I ought never to forget. Hope with me that it will all end handsomely, and I be at liberty once more to "get out of this." If I had health and impudence, great things lie before me here; but I have neither the one nor the other; and on the whole do not want great things.—O Heaven, peace, peace, that is all I want!

Thank James for his care of Craigenputtock; bid him do what farther with it *he* judges fittest. Thank him too for his diligence with the *Revolution;* it gratifies me greatly. I send my brotherly love to one and all. Glad am I to learn that Alick is doing well; right glad. I will write to some of you again ere long. And now enough, O Sister Jean! I have physic in me, I am weary, and have much to do.*

Your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 39

To Alexander Carlyle, Ecclefechan.

Chelsea, 10 May, 1838.

My dear Brother—I must send you a short line rather than none at all. At present in the heat and press of Lecturing and tumult, I can afford no writing; it is not so much that I want

* To the foregoing Mrs. Carlyle adds a long postscript which is printed as Letter 22 in the "New Letters and Memorials."

time, as that I altogether want composure and spirits. You will take what I can send; if you saw completely how I am situated you would not think me stingy, I imagine, but wonderfully liberal "considering."

Your Letter came, and one from Jean not very far off it; which last I have answered, with a request that the purport of news in said answer should be transmitted over to you. I was right glad to learn, both from yourself and still more pointedly from Jean, that all was going on quite handsomely at Ecclefechan; that you found your traffic answer the end, and stood faithfully to it; that there was every hope of its turning out as well as the hopefullest of us expected. What a blessing it must be to an industrious man to see, not, as you have long been forced to do, his substance gradually wasting away from him, but an *increase* were it even a slow one granted to his toil, and the certainty that at least day and way are *alike* long! There is nothing that I know of more harassing to a man than the kind of lot you have had to struggle with for long years past. With all the faults there were, I can assure you, dear Alick, I have many times admired the constancy, the quietude you displayed, and on the whole how *well* you behaved. Thank God, the worst seems now to be over, and better days are dawning for you. "Better a wee bush than nae bield," they say. Be well content with poor Ecclefechan, in that it will do for you what prouder places have refused to do: yield you meat and clothes for your labour. A man can get no more that I know of in this world. And as for past toils and sufferings, we will say that surely we *needed* them: that if we need more of them, we should hope to *get* more of them. Folly is bound up in the heart of a man; pride, anger, intolerance,—self-conceit, in a

word the root of all sin. One must be beaten with many stripes till *that* be beaten out of him. Courage, my dear Brother, I say, be steady and teachable, diligent and patient; live and learn!— As for your success in business I surely think the worst is past now, and that you have a free chance to hold on prospering still better henceforth. Be in no *haste* to prosper, desire not much prosperity. A man saving five pounds in the year is, I believe, nearly *always* a luckier man than one that is spending five hundred thousand. I do believe this, and know it more and more, from what I see daily here under my eyes. O the tumult, the mad uproar as of a Bedlam; and all the cut-glass and upholstery of the world will not satiate *one* soul of Adam's many sons; not the poorest cobbler will be filled with it all, but desire something greater than it all. If I had any practical precept to enforce again upon you as to your Shop, it would be this one, *To have faith in the honesty of human nature;* I mean, to believe in spite of all appearances to the contrary that honesty will prevail against dishonesty even in Ecclefechan, and any where under the Sun. It is a great truth. Have nothing to do therefore with bad articles at all at any price. All men do at least desire to deal with a man of that sort; a man of that sort is sure to be acknowledged too, were it even slowly, and to draw round him all the worthy people in the district he lives in. I have no conviction clearer than this. Moderate profits, genuine goods, faithful punctuality; the conduct, in one word, of an *honest man:* that is the rule. And so I leave you; adding only Jack's precept, to cultivate your handwriting. Write often, and choose your pen; by degrees you will find your writing improve into a swift free-flowing hand, and this will be a great convenience to you. God prosper you, my dear

Brother! We shall all perhaps get better on, a little, than we have done for years past.

. . . I have seen nothing of any brother-in-law of Jamie's yet; nor until he come can I know anything about his motions. He should be very welcome to me if he came. But probably he is in "the City" as they call it; that is the Eastern trading part of London, and some four or five miles off this region. London is like a whole set of Towns; I might say, a set of Nations. The people even *speak* differently rather, on different sides of it; I can know their dialects now, and say "you are a Chelsea man," "you are of the Whitechapel region," etc., etc.

. . . Did my Mother send you a *Times* Newspaper, as I hope she would? In that case you would see I had got to sailing-depth once more, and was out on the Ocean waters; lecturing, lecturing! I believe there have been other Newspaper critics, and that they have all been laudatory; tho' I have seen none more except the *Examiner* (Hunt writes that in it), which also my Mother got from me. I think she said once they sent it on to you regularly.—I was in a dreadful state of tremour and misery the first day; also a certain Doctor here had recommended a kind of *Hartshorn* preparation which I was to take for "quieting my nerves,"—a cure far worse than the disease: however, I weltered thro' that first time, and always since, it has been simpler and simpler. I have three Lectures (fully the worst three) behind me now, a fourth to-morrow, and hope to go on in some reasonable way till I again get *done!* My audience rather increases as yet, and is very kind and respectful to me; they seem quite a different set of people, three-fourths of them, and men with an air of *law* and business. Our new Lecture-room (the only tolerable place for speaking that

one could get, last year's being a dining-room and fiddling-room utterly detestable to me) lies quite out of the beat of my fashionable friends, not a fourth part of whom seem to have followed me to the new shop. . . .' But on the whole I am what they call "successful"; and may perhaps do myself good in the long run beyond what can be counted up in money at present. The people shall hear a little more of my mind this year, for I stand in less and less terror of them; and feel much "more like a teacher and less like a showman" than I did. And so, my Boy, I must toil on for a calendar month yet; ah me!—and if you hear nothing more of me, fancy that all goes smoothly, and that nothing is wrong.

Jane continues weakly, yet is always able to go out at Lecture time; she says that "any *harl* of health that she has is always then." * The weather is against her: bitter north wind and burning sun. My own poor carcase suffers a little from the shatterment of nerves, etc.; I do not sleep altogether as I could wish; but I shall hold on, I think, and perhaps grow quieter even before "the 10th of June." Enough now: I must end.—I hope the little creature has got done with its bits of ailments; that Jane is as stout as ever. She is a clever lassie it seems with her book too. And Tom, what of him, the stubborn-minded individual? Give them all a *snap* † each, poor little creatures, in my name.—Remember us well at Scotsbrig, at Annan, to all our loved ones.

Adieu, dear Brother, Your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

* "And ony harl [trifle] o' health she has is aye aboot mealtime," as a country fellow, in Dr. Thom's surgery at Ecclefechan, said when enumerating his poor mother's ailments.

† Cake of hard gingerbread.

LETTER 40

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 12th June, 1838.

My dear Mother—. . . What I am to do now? This is altogether uncertain yet. For one thing, I have made a kind of engagement here to *print* my Articles, etc., and that will detain me a few weeks at any rate. I could get no money for the Books; indeed I instantly tired of seeking: and Fraser, who I suspect had *heard* of my being on the search, and of what ill speed I had, Fraser I say *drew up* all of a sudden, and was quite determined that *he* would go on the "half-profits" system or not at all. Whereupon I said to myself, "Not thou, O Fraser, not thou but another; *any* other is preferable to thee!" So I walked over, and made a half-profits bargain with "Saunders & Ottley," a Bookselling house of far better character than Fraser's, and who at any rate are useful to me in the Lecturing business. *Teufelsdröckh* accordingly is actually at Press; and I can hope to give my Mother an English copy of him in regular shape before long. Poor fellow, he has had a sore struggle to get out here, some seven years or more; but having started up in Yankeeland, they were forced to let him out here; he *would* not keep down. Good luck to him we will say;—tho' perhaps he is no great shakes after all, poor fellow! How the Yankees are going on with printing, etc., etc., you will see by these flaming epistles, which I send along with this. The printing of these Books, I calculate, will be useful to me here as a Lecturer; that is my view of it, even should I get no money otherwise,

and nothing but trouble, by them. Nay, I have not yet bargained any farther than as to *Teufelsdröckh* with these Booksellers here; and perhaps shall go no farther, but take some different scheme with it. . . . Be quiet and happy till I come to you!

Your affectionate son,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 41

To Alexander Carlyle, Ecclefechan.

Chelsea, 13th June, 1838.

My dear Alick—There is a bundle of Letters going off to my Mother, in which, tho' doubtless you will all share in them, I may as well insert specially a single line for you. Our Lectures are over, as you will learn abundantly from our Mother; over, and well over: I suppose they will yield us some scrap of "private capital," on which we may be able by dint of thrift to struggle on again till the season come round, next year, if we live to see it. A very great blessing to one who like me has not for many years, you may say never at all, seen any fixed prospect of livelihood before him. . . . There is fair play for a man here, if he can get *play* at all; people ask not, who or what he is, so much as simply, whether he *can* say or do anything that has any substance in it for them.—

Since I wrote my Mother's sheet, the first Proof of *Teufelsdröckh* has actually come to hand and been corrected: it will make a nice enough Book, which I hope to shew you soon. "I am glad he is going to get published, poor beast," said Jane. And so am I too, "poor beast"; he has had a sore fight for it,

these seven years and more, since you and I drove down to Glencaple that August morning;* so many years struggling to get his head above ground, up out of the mire;—almost like the Author of him, we may say! And now he is actually getting up; and will breathe, and live as long as is appointed him; a day, or a year and a day, that is of no moment; simply *as long as it is given him*, which is just the *right* longness.

I cannot tell you yet what I am going to do, or when or how I shall get to Annandale (if possible); but it will clear itself up before long, and then you shall soon hear. I am and shall be in a *heated* sort of state, for some while; a state I do nowise like; but it will not last: I shall get *quiet* again with the smallest possible delay. I hear still that there are people meaning to "give me a dinner," I heard so again yesterday: but I will not have it, unless the contrary be impossible; a "dinner" will do little for me, except fret my poor nerves: but really the friends here that I have are worthy of all gratitude from me. . . . Jane seems to grow distinctly a little better as the summer gets in, through all these fierce east winds: she is a little *under* par to-day, and cannot go out with me to the place we were to dine at. . . .

Remember us both, in all affection, to Jenny and the Bairns. Good be with you, dear Brother, and with yours!

T. CARLYLE.

* On starting for London, summer, 1831.

LETTER 42

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 21st June, 1838.

My dear Mother—. . . The printing of *Teufelsdröckh* proceeds apace and cannot last beyond three weeks, I should say. It will be a pretty enough Book. I do not mean to go on with the others at present: I hear for certain that they are done or nearly done in America: by way of saving myself trouble for which there is no sure or evident money-return, I will wait till I hear from America before printing farther. I wrote to Emerson, the other day about it; about sending me some of *their* copies over to sell them here for my own behoof. We will hear first, and then determine.

My Lectures, now that the whole matter is summed up, have realised in gross about £300; from which about £40 of expenses (higher a little than they should be) were to be deducted; so that our net product is just about £260: better than I expected; better very decidedly than I expected once. All the rest of it is satisfactory as anything could be: on the whole we ought to be quietly thankful for it. I clap in here a £5 note, of which you are to distribute the individual sovereigns among my sisters and yourself: Mary, Jean, Sandy's Jenny, Jamie's Isabella, and Mother's Self,—a sovereign each to all the woman-kind, which they may buy bonnets with or brats* and pattens, and call "the Lecture." . . .

* Pinafores.

LETTER 43

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 6th July, 1838.

My dear Sister—. . . I feel as if growing fast *old* especially in mind and heart. It often seems to me strange that I have but been four years here; I feel as if I had lived at least twenty since we left Scotland. True enough, I have had a bit of fighting, seen and unseen; but I have tript up the enemy a little, and ought to be content for the present. *Content* is not the word, *indifferent* is nearer it; I never more authentically considered the whole world as smoke and triviality than I do even now. But I am resting, I am resting; let us lie and rest, and say nothing!

A Miss Fergus from Kirkcaldy was here staying: I had to accompany her to see the Coronation Procession; we had been invited to the Montagus' window, but should not otherwise have gone. I had even a "ticket to the Abbey" (a thing infinitely precious), but gave that decidedly away. Crowds and mummery are not agreeable to me. The Procession was all gilding, velvet and grandeur; the poor little Queen seemed to have been *greeting;* one could not but wish the poor little lassie well: she is small, sonsy and modest,—and has the ugliest task, I should say, of all girls in these Isles. Our Hyde-Park Fair was literally about *a hundred* Lamb-fairs* all in one; perfectly good-natured, but such a gathering as eye never saw. I have heard

* Carlyle refers to the great Lockerbie Fair for the sale of lambs, held in August each year.

of nothing that pleases me like the dining of Ecclefechan on the top of Burnswark that day!* Well done! . . .

LETTER 44

To Dr. Carlyle, Milan.

Chelsea, 18 July, 1838.

My dear Brother—. . . *Teufelsdröckh* is not out yet to my knowledge. I leave it freely to take its own way in that and all respects. I am sitting for my picture again,—instigated by my Wife or "some demon more wicked."† The Artist, one Laurence, has greatly the air of a first-rate young man; he was extremely anxious to volunteer on this occasion, and has had it in the wind for above six months; he evidently expects to succeed; but I must say that, tho' we are half way now, there does not appear to me any considerable hope of him or it. I sit daily; three sittings more and I have done with it:‡ all other work, entertainment, excitation I sit withdrawn from for the present. *Ein Faulenzer* [an idler]? Wait a while! . . .

John Sterling was here yesterday: he has a little Article in Mill's Review on *Montaigne*, which is to be out on Monday next.

* Celebration of Queen Victoria's coronation, 20th June, by the villagers in holiday and picnic on Burnswark Hill.

† "It seems probable, my friends, that Ananias was tempted unto this by some demon *more wicked than his wife.*" Rev. Dr. Nimmo in a sermon heard by Carlyle when a student in Edinburgh.

‡ The picture done at this time was the large painting in oil, not the crayon sketch by the same artist. Carlyle gave the painting to his mother; after her death it became the property of James Carlyle, and is now in possession of his grandson at Milnholm, Langholm.

He scribbles or writes at a great rate for Blackwood, etc.; and is on the whole one of the most restless men now extant. His inability to be at rest seems to me the worst symptom of him: otherwise *ein gar brüderlicher Mann* [a very brotherly man.] Mill I saw last night; borrowing some Books from him. Friendly as ever when we meet, but that is now rarely: our paths diverge more and more; to me he is nearly altogether barren; to him I am perhaps *oppressive* in the self-subsistence which he (tho' only in Benthamic speculation of Radicalism) very properly aims at. . . .

LETTER 45

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 26th July, 1838.

My dear Mother—. . Yesterday morning I sent away a large Packet of Books, to go by steamer to Edinburgh; and thereafter to be forwarded by coach to James Aitken at Dumfries. They will probably arrive early in the next month (August), and serve you all reading for a while. The address was ordered to be "James Aitken, English Street, Dumfries"; and one or two of the Books are marked specially for him, one or two also for Alick; the rest are for your care, as usual, to be lent out and read as you direct. *Scott's Life* by Lockhart is among them with some unimportant *etceteras.* But the finest item of the collection, you will say, I hope, is *Teufelsdröckh,* fairly at last in the shape of a Book! They have got it out finally, after long delays; and it will take its lot like other things. It is not a pretty volume, not at all finely done off; but on the whole I care next to nothing at all about it, or about

what comes of it,—"a kirk and a mill" if the world like: *I* had fairly done with it almost seven years ago. The present edition is small; the sale will not be great. . . .

The Painter Jane spoke of, taking my picture, has wearied me a good deal, and made out as good as nothing;—a likeness as of one in doleful dumps, with its mouth all *sheyled** and its eyes looking fiercely out: meant to be very tragical. Jane is off to see it even now; and will decide: Finish or burn. My vote is distinctly the *latter;* at all events *I* am free of it now, let them do as they like. . . .

LETTER 46

To His Mother, Manchester.

Kirkcaldy, 25th August, 1838.

My dear Mother—No doubt you are much surprised to see me date in answer to you from Kirkcaldy, the "Lang Toun" I had done with long ago; but I will explain how it is. For several weeks, indeed all summer I had been suffering as I usually do from London dust and London tumult; and regretting considerably that I had not fled to the country directly on the ending of my Lectures. . . . As various persons, the Ferguses of Kirkcaldy among others, had invited me pressingly to pay them visits, I did at last (Jane encouraging me) get under way and on board of an Edinburgh steamer, last Saturday; and so, winds and waves proving moderately favourable, here I am since Tuesday last,—very greatly bettered already by the shaking up I have had. . . . Besides this Kirkcaldy visit, I have to give a glance at Edinburgh as I

* Twisted awry.

pass, and then to spend some days with Aitken the minister of Minto near Hawick, who was with us in London lately; so that we may hope Jack will have arrived, and you be about ready to start [for home] with him by the time I get sight of the Solway again. This then, is the figure of the thing, dear Mother; you are to fancy me waiting here, and slowly wending southward, in hope of a glad meeting for all of us in Scotsbrig soon. I add only that Jane was moderately stout when I came away, and anxious mainly that *I* would get a little better. A Lady of her acquaintance, now travelling for six weeks in Germany, had lent her a nice little carriage of the *clatch* sort, with horse and man, in which she could go driving about, and there were two or three friends of hers at hand; so that she was likely to do very well till my return. All are very kind to her and me.

As for myself no man is better off since I got hither. The people are proud to have me, and are in themselves good people, amply provided for both with kindliness of spirit, and with worldly goods. They are two elderly unmarried sisters, and one unmarried brother, John Fergus, lately Member of Parliament, but who has now given it up, and lives here minding his own farming and flax manufacturing, one of the jolliest, healthiest, best-conditioned of men. They have set me on a fine horse, swift, strong and quiet, on which I scour about for some two hours daily. Then too I bathe in the beautiful blue sea-water, at what hour I like. For the rest they *let me alone:* all is rightly arranged about their house. I sleep sound, eat moderately, bathe and ride, and go along as well as anybody could wish. It is quite wonderful to myself what an improvement is made in my health since I got here. Let me be thankful for

it. So long as I can stay here without wearying, it will be good for me to stay I think. . . .

LETTER 47

To His Wife, Chelsea.

Kirkcaldy, 26th August, 1838.

My own Jeannie—Elizabeth * has got me a frank for to-morrow; and as our post sets off early in the day, I must write you a word this afternoon; another word can, if need is, be added in the morning. I have indeed nothing at all to say; but you will thank me for saying even nothing in black on white. So here goes.

From the mere date you will infer that things go moderately right with me, since I still continue here. In fact my day of departure and all future movements are as unfixed as ever. . . .

Our party you already know; Elizabeth you know, and probably Miss Jessie, a most jocose, blithe-smiling, good-doing blonde-insipid young lady of a certain age, wearisome a little, yet easy to live with, and whom it is a shame to speak otherwise than admiringly of. John Fergus, our landlord, is a man-mountain for size, "most athletic and best-natured of men"; very conversible, rational, and well-conditioned every way; an active extensive farmer and manufacturer, who does much business daily, and daily takes a fair swill of the good things of life along with him; a man whom I like rather better, as I know him rather better. Healthy limitation, that is the rule of things here; dashed pretty considerably with the virtuous-insipid:

* Miss Fergus, afterwards Countess Pepoli.

all right and well. My bedroom is the back bedroom; . . . I awake generally above an hour too early, but put off the time in some tolerable way; this morning, for example, at half-past seven, I sallied out in blustering wind, and plunged myself into the sea, an adventurous, but rather successful step, which perhaps when there is not rain I shall repeat. Shaving and deliberate dressing carries one on to nine o'clock, when some kind of thing (a gong I think) gives a huge low growl somewhere in the lower premises and indicates that Breakfast is on the table. A most plenteous breakfast, in the many good things of which, except tea and coffee (with some eminent ham), I must hesitate to partake. Slowly with some loose conversation we breakfast; a certain old Surgeon, one Johnston (the Edinburgh Bailie's brother) stalks in daily, with hardly any speech at all, to look at the newspaper, and stalks out again: they say he has done it daily these fifteen years! Our breakfast done, the ladies leave us for the drawing-room; and after a due space, we remaining two do also withdraw, John to his counting-house or to his farms till five in the afternoon, I to my own premises or to the drawing-room, or whither I list. Hitherto almost every morning there has been a hurried letter to write, for the South Post at twelve; London letters not *arriving* (which is unlucky) till after one. After one, however, the post has arrived too, and the Newspaper; after which there is clearly nothing to be looked for from the world; you are then clearly "left to your own intrepidity and force of purpose." Our dames, I suppose, go out charity-ing, fowl-feeding, marketing; as for me, I smoke, I have books, I have the sea and the highways. These two last especially: I have bathed hitherto every day (except yesterday when John had me riding out far and wide among his farms);

I have also ridden two hours or more every day,—putting on bad clothes if it rain; in bright days, with the fresh woods, clear hill-tops, with the blue everlasting deep and the Bass and Lothian ever and anon in sight, and a swift beast to carry you, it is as pleasant riding as could be contrived. The people here are nearly all grown utter strangers to me; but yonder is the old Bass Rock, yonder is my poor Jeannie's birthland, and twenty years of fateful time are written on them for me. O my dear bairn, if I had thee here, I feel as if I should be quite happy for a while. We are to come next year when the *great* house is done building: we actually will, I think; shall we not? It is a tolerably good sign of me, when I long to have loved ones near me, especially sharptempered wives; accordingly I do incline to say that I have made considerable improvement this week, though the hours do not suit me altogether. But to proceed: the gong growls again at half-past five, and luncheoned, or unluncheoned as I, but all in full dress of solemn black with what of silk is fit, we solemnly descend to dinner. There is free allowance of good things a-many; of good wines among others, in which latter I think I shall cease or nearly so to partake: two glasses, one glass, four glasses, a glass of whisky punch, all seem to do me mischief alike. A walk ensues, executed by John and me about the doors, I smoking as I walk; then, near eight I suppose, is found limited supply of excellent tea, and talk in which I have to do more than I want, till on the stroke of ten enter *garçon* again with a tray of bottles, with two biscuits, and the promise (soon fulfilled) to me of a plate of tolerable porridge. . . . At half-past ten, "candles" are ordered, but not brought to us; they are stuck in our rooms, fine wax-lights, and we are all sent marching thither at that early hour.

Indeed a certain solemnity is throughout visible here; a great dressing and washing; manifold creatures carrying off your clothes to ever new brushings, etc., etc.: but all is right at bottom, and you do find yourself served, and that a hospitable spirit, better every way than common, encircles you. We seem to have in the regular way no visitors. . . . We had Peter Swan, one day; I have never yet called at their house; and my conscience says, "sinner that I am!" I will go to-morrow if possible. In short you know *enough* about our ways here; my very hand is sore splashing down vocables in this manner: besides, "who could spell with *sic* a pen?" I will out to ride; it is now three o'clock, and I sat out the dullest lecture in a hot kirk,—not to be repeated! I give thee a kiss for this day, and say, God bless thee, thou sharptempered Goody. I will add a word to-morrow. Thine, dear Jean, ever and ever!—T. C.

Monday morning.—Dear Wifie,—One word more before we go this morning. I have been awake since six (yet dozing again, and *not* bathing); in spite of the *hours*, etc., I feel decidedly in an improved and improving way. We are to be off to Leslie Village, John and I, at eleven o'clock, that is in half an hour. Brief therefore!—Yesterday afternoon we had the Surgeon, one Philp, to dinner, a simple, scrub-headed, pacific man. My foot had grown decidedly and altogether unaccountably lame: Philp suggested that probably I had been bit in bathing by a *medusa* or sea-nettle; I think it is so, for to-day it feels greatly mended, and I halt no more. This morning, Jardine, the Edinburgh Engineer, stept in to breakfast: a hard sarcastic old fellow, with a large white broadbrimmed hat; perfect in his Annandale dialect to a degree that leaves even me behind: we did very well he and I. On Wednesday they say Mrs. James

Stewart and perhaps Mr. James (American Stewart) are coming; which shall be well. I *went* to tea with Mrs. Swan last night, having in despair sent a Note that I would do it and got her sanction: she was in deep widow-weeds, very lugubrious; but the two lads and I helped the matter out. . . .

Eleven o'clock is surely just at hand; here too is Elizabeth with a Note in her hand, which she has left. My end is come for the present. Write, dear Goody, as I bid thee. Forget my biliary temper, remember only the poor heart that does mean truly by thee. And be good to me thou dear Goody! Also take care of all damps and etceteras, that I do not find thee coughing on my return. Love to John Sterling by name, to others in lump.

Ever affectionately thine,

T. CARLYLE.

P. S.—Does the carriage run? Drive daily in it: I like right well to fancy thee there. Perhaps we shall some time have a *Gig* of our own? Thou "poor man's wife."

LETTER 48

To His Wife, Chelsea.

Minto Manse, Hawick, 4th Sepr. 1838.

Dear Goody,—Your two Newspapers were handed in to me this morning while shaving; they had been forwarded from Bank Street, where your dear little Letter (nay it was a long full Letter) lay waiting for me duly on Saturday. That is a good lassie! There is nothing like punctuality. I should have

been disappointed beyond expression had you failed on that occasion; but you did not fail.—To-day there is nothing but rain, past, present and future: wherefore I have fled from a dull company, while it is not yet noon, into the Minister's study; and will here with all copiousness splash down what is needful to bring forward the record, and answer as I have been answered. The invaluable Mintos moreover, it would seem, have the will and power to frank: the only thing against me is the damp *cold*, which makes my hand and my very jaws go shivering as in ague (for we have no fires anywhere); this and a bad unmendable pen—must even be put up with.

I have been here since Tuesday evening (it is now Thursday); I left Kirkcaldy that morning between seven and eight, in dim rainy weather, and did not arrive here till about the same hour in the evening; rain, dull company, fatigue and want of dinner being the main features of the day. The Kirkcaldy visit may be said to have gone off with complete effect. Nothing could be kinder, politer, more attentive than the good Ferguses were, one and all of them. They seemed to like me, and I really felt grateful for what they did and forbore to do. . . . In short it is all settled, Goodykin, that we are *both* to go back next year if we prosper, and make a right thing of it. To me it has been truly beneficial I think, and I am certain it was often truly pleasant; I rode every day but two, sometimes a matter of twenty miles; I bathed every day but two: the very sight of the green hilly country, of the everlasting rocks and divine sea-water, with Scotch faces ancient and new (for the very infants had a broad miniature Scotchhood interesting to me): all this, as one galloped about in it in the bright autumn, made up a kind of inarticulate Poem, most sad, most beautiful: "a good joy."

You must thank Elizabeth yourself by a speedy threepenny; you are she that beats us all for a deep threepenny. . . .

On the day my Letter specified, John Fergus and I went over to Edinburgh: the bright day saddened down very soon into gloom and rain; my history there that day was sad enough: all mortals out of town! I called first at your Uncle Robert's: gone to the West country for a month. John Jeffrey: gone to the East country for, etc. In one word, I went splashing about till all my cards were exhausted, and not a soul was to be found at home. . . . Sam Aitken alone of men did I speak to; brisk, rapid as ever, tho' a little wrinkly about the eyes, and with head grown very decidedly grey. In a kind of despair I went into Ambrose's for a pipe and spoonful of grog: but, alas, Ambrose himself is dead, and all has gone wrong there too. At half-past four o'clock John Fergus came with his *shandrydan*, and carried me back to Newhaven and Fife again. On the Saturday appointed for your Letter, I was luckier: your Letter would have come to me (by arrangement with Sam) next day, but I could not wait; besides the little Duke [Francis Jeffrey] had written to me in the interim, a card of mine with my address having been left for him at Moray Place; . . . But at Sam's —there lay thy Letter! It is all right my Goody, all very right. I read it there, and again on the Calton Hill, whither I had retired with it and a cigar, and all Edinburgh and the Frith in clear sunshine at my feet: to spend some twenty minutes I had in the perfectest felicity attainable at the time. Thanks for that Letter!

Jeffrey to whom I had written in answer to his Note, sat by appointment at half-past two waiting for me at Moray Place. We talked long, in the style of literary and philosophic clitter-

clatter; finally it was settled that I should go out with him to dinner at Craigcrook, and not return to Fife till the morrow. . . . At the due hour I joined the Duke at his Town house; and we walked out together as in old times. The Empsons were still there, tho' about to move southward in some ten days; Mrs. Jeffrey and they welcomed me, all alone. The evening was not on the whole equal to a good solitary one. The Duke talked immensely and made me talk; but it struck me he was grown weaker; or is it I that have been used to better talk? . . . To crown the whole, Mrs. Jeffrey's tea was too good; I made a most imperfect sleep with immense effort, and was glad to be set down at my steamboat again on the morrow morning. My bed was in *our* old room: ah me! The poor Duke and I seemed to have made up our minds *not* to contradict each other; but it was at the expense of saying nothing intimate: on the whole we managed it; and my esteem for Jeffrey could not hide from me that at bottom our speech was, as I said, *clatter*. In fact he is becoming an amiable old fribble; very cheerful, very heartless, very—forgetable and tolerable! Compliments to you were many. . . .

But now, not to tire you with more of this, fancy me set down at Minto from the Minister's vehicle, which waited for us at "Ancrum Bridge"; fancy me be-rained ever since; and for the present not happy here! . . .

What a touching thing is that £50 from America! One prays that the blessing of him that was *rather ill off* may be with them, these good friends of mine. Courage, my Goody! I begin to feel as if one might grow to be moderately content with a lot like mine. All *will* be well yet. What did you *do* with the bill? Laid it by?—The only deficiency in your dispatch is the

want of news from Jack, who I thought would have sent some token of himself before now. . . . Ramsgate is as good a place as can be; go by all means if you can: nay, if Jack have not come, I hope you are there even now. The very sound of the sea has health in it for me. . . . O Goody of me, was there ever such a blockhead of a Letter! And now it is getting towards 3 o'clock, and the rain has become Scotch mist; and I must walk or do worse. Accept the will for the deed, poor little Bairn! Ah me, I wish I were—but no matter. I kiss thee a hundred times. Be well and cheerful. Send Jack hither to me; I think I will not stay *very* long. Adieu, Dearest.

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 49

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, Tuesday, 28th Novr., 1838.

. . . I am well enough; meaning soon to be busy, tho' it is not yet perfectly clear at what. Some "Article," I suppose; but it must be one of some significance. The little one already written comes out to-morrow: it is entitled "Varnhagen von Ense's Memoirs"; I will send the *Review* by and by (about New Year's time), and you will read it pleasantly enough; but it is on the whole worth nothing at all except the cash I get for it. They are out of measure anxious to have more writing from me; indeed almost troublesome about it, for it seems to me doubtful whether that is my best course now or not. The American reprint of my Articles, a beautiful blue Book with "Carlyle's Miscellanies" on the back of it, is come to hand;

that is to say, two good volumes of it are come; other two they must be beginning to print one of these days: I have fixed with Fraser to sell for *my* behoof 250 copies of it; I count on gaining pretty certainly £200 by the job were they all sold as they are likely to be by and by; at all events, I cannot entirely be cheated in them; but after deducting the bookseller's enormous charge (40 per cent. for the mere act of selling), whatsoever they do bring in I shall get. The *French Revolution* too it seems is near done; I will combine America with this country, and have another edition of that too, with clear prospect of profits, before long. It will be March probably before the "Miscellanies" arrive from America; this, had I seen into the thing sooner as I now see it, might have been avoided, for the thing would sell now were it here. My dear Mother shall have a copy, go without one who will. Let us be thankful therefore that all is so tolerable; that we are well in health, and no longer so terribly poor as we used to be of late years. Jane stands the winter as yet quite handsomely; she is evidently much stouter than she was this time twelve-month. We partly expect Mrs. Welsh by and by: . . .

LETTER 50

To His Mother, Annan.

Chelsea, Saturday, 29th Decr., 1838.

. . . I have realised my American Draft of Dollars into Pounds Sterling; I send my dear Mother five off the fore-end of it: the "kitlin ought to bring the auld cat a mouse" in such a case as that,—an American mouse! It is very curious that

cash should come in that way to good Annandale industry from across three thousand miles of salt water, from kind hands that we never saw. . . . It does not seem at all likely that I shall ever have much money in this world; but I am not now so terribly hard held as I used to be, such bitter thrift may perhaps be less imperative by and by.

Jane's health is again somewhat stronger: she still goes out in fine days a little, and does not cough. We hope she will be able to hold up till the year turn; she is evidently better than she has been of late winters. This day (which is wet) she sits by me "covering a chair," a new stuffed very pretty chair, which a certain Mr. [Erasmus] Darwin (one of my Lecture friends) brought in yesterday, by way of New Year's gift: very handsome indeed! She herself some time before that had bought for me with her own cash a huge article of the kind they call Tub-chair; it is really like a *tub*, or hogshead, all stuffed round; screens you from every draft, and the only fault is that one cannot sit in it without *falling asleep*. I wish many times you had it, up in your room yonder; with a good clear fire in front, and *it* all round (for it would rise a foot over your head) you might let the winds rave as they liked,—provided always no cattle or other *outlers* were exposed to them! . . .

LETTER 51

To His Mother, Annan.

Chelsea, 13th January, 1839.

. . . There is nothing new in this household of ours; all goes on smoothly, and in a way we ought to be thankful for.

Jane does not fall into coughing; on the contrary, is able to move about; goes out every good day; indeed last night, was out at dinner, some four or five miles off this, and does not seem to have suffered by it. . . . I daresay I mentioned last time that I was not intending to work any farther at present in the *Westminster Review*, but to write by and by something more to my mind than that sort of stuff. I have my face turned partly towards Oliver Cromwell and the *Covenant* time in England and Scotland, and am reading books and meaning to read more on the matter (for it is large and full of meaning); but what I shall make of it, or whether I shall make anything at all, it would be premature to say as yet. The only thing clear is that I *have* again some notion of writing, which I had not at all last year or the year before; a sign doubtless that I am getting into heart again, and not so utterly bewildered and beaten down as I was on the conclusion of my "Revolution" struggle. Anything that I wrote now would sell better than former things, and I think indeed be pretty sure to bring in a certain trifle of money in the long run.—Another object that engages me a little in these last weeks is the attempt to see whether a Public Library cannot be got instituted here in London; a thing scandalously wanted, which I have suffered from like others. There *is* to be some stir made in that business now, and it looks really as if it would take effect: meanwhile I can "do either way"; for the Cambridge people have in the kindest manner offered to get me books out of their University Library, and send them hither to read; a very kind, and one may hope, a very useful thing. Indeed all the people are very kind to me; which is rather surprising, considering what a sulky fellow I am. There will be Lectures too to think of—ah

me! But for the present I keep all that out of my head. So you may picture us sitting snug here, most evenings, in "stuffed-chairs" in this warm little parlour; reading, or reading and sewing, or talking with some rational visitor that has perhaps dropped in:—in a state, which, as states go, one ought to be thankful for. Some people say I ought to get a *horse* with my American money, before Lecture-time, and ride, that I might be in better bodily condition for that enterprise: I should like it right well *if it were not so dear.* We shall see how things go: this, at any rate, is no season for riding.—Among our other benefits, I should tell you the Ferguses of Kirkcaldy have sent us two big *Barrels,* one filled with the best of potatoes; the other with carrots and a bag of oatmeal; the produce of their Fife Farm! . . .

Jane says "she will write you a letter *legible* from top to bottom," and one to Jean also, thanking her for the braw caps,—"soon." Meanwhile her love and mine to Mary and you all! Good be ever with you dear Mother!

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 52

To Dr. Carlyle, Naples.

Chelsea, 5th Feby., 1839.

. . . I have this morning, for the first time, got a fire once more in my old Library, am writing at my old table, with my books all round; and mean to be very busy henceforth. Till now I have sat down stairs, reading, reading; not idle, yet with no very visible result of my working. I have read a

good many volumes about Cromwell and his time; I have a good many more to read. Whether a book will come of it or not, still more *when* such will come, are questions as yet. The *pabulum* the subject yields me is not very great; I find it far inferior in interest to my French subject: but on the whole I want to get *acquainted with England* (a great secret to me always hitherto), and I may as well begin here as elsewhere. There are but two very remarkable men in the Period visible as yet: Cromwell and Montrose. The rest verge towards wearisomeness; indeed the whole subject is Dutch-built, heavy-bottomed; with an internal fire and significance indeed, but externally wrapt in buckram and lead. We shall see. In the meanwhile, I have got a large Portmanteau of Books about the thing from Cambridge University Library: here they actually stand; sent me by persons whom I never saw; a most handsome and encouraging phenomenon! They came on Friday too (the day of your Letter), which we may account a lucky day. The visible agent in the business is one Douglas Heath, a promising young Barrister, who sometimes comes here, a Cambridge man, and a zealous reader of mine.—Precisely at this point arrives the Postman with a Newspaper and strokes from Alick (all well there); and a Letter from Emerson at Concord enclosing a draft for £100! Their Boston Edition of the *F. R.* is all sold out, and this is the money-produce, so far as liquidated yet. Was any braver thing ever heard of? A hundred and fifty pounds from beyond the salt sea, while not a sixpence could be realised here in one's own country by the thing! I declare, my American friends are right fellows, and have done their affair with effect. The *Miscellanies* are at press since about Christmas; will be over here by and by; greatly to Fraser's

satisfaction, who is announcing them what he can. It seems I am going to make some cash after all by those Books of mine. The second English edition of the *F. R.* must now be set about; I must see how to combine that with the American demand, make rigorous bargain with the printing people, and see what can be done with it. The Postman delivery will give you a glad feeling too. Unhappily two American men (one Sumner, whom you will perhaps see in Italy, and another) arrived just on the skirts of Postie, and have held me clattering ever since; above an hour; till my nerves are all in a flutter, and this sheet of yours must suffer. However, you perceive, *tout va bien*, neither need we now add, *le pain manque*. . . . Of course there will a time come for some appearance as a Lecturer, I suppose: but of all this I think not as yet. The only item rather clear to me is that if I do lecture, I ought to have a horse during the process and a month prior to it. Dyspepsia, rousing me in the frosty darkness of morning, and shattering my poor frame of body all to pieces, is a terrible millstone hung about me; I feel as if it were the *only* thing I had to complain of now; and withal as if it needed only a little help to reduce it under moderate subjection, and leave me much quieter and healthier than I have been for a dozen years past. . . . The other night I met with a French *lionlet*, one Comte de Vigny, a Carlist literary dandy; civil; Parisian; with a long Roman nose, and next to no chin. I have also breakfasted with Rogers; the occasion was a mighty project—no less than that of instituting a Public Library here from which books might be *borrowed*. I have *preached* upon it till people take it up; Spedding has promulgated a Prospectus; Rogers approves, Hallam and a list of official Lords are expected; your friend Sir James Clark *zeal-*

ously approves; and now the Newspaper engine is set a-blowing: slight thunder from the *Times*, a fierce blast (from me) in the *Examiner*, etc.: it really looks as if the thing would take effect in one shape or another. . . .

LETTER 53

To Thomas Ballantyne, Bolton, Lancashire.

Chelsea, 23rd Feby., 1839.

My dear Sir—. . . As for the question of Autobiography,* I think you have yourself put it on the right footing; and anything I have to say can only be confirmatory of what is already your own view. Autobiography, if well done, is the most universally interesting of all things; any man's life will interest us if he tell it with insight, with candour and simplicity, without self-conceit; in a word, wisely and not foolishly. A man, moreover, who has cut his way from a jungle of confusions, in which he first found himself imprisoned and bewildered, he is precisely the man we wish to hear on such a matter.

As to the time when, this is as you rightly feel a question of circumstances; not to be decided absolutely, but by judicious appreciation of *Pro* and *contra*. At a later age one's view is clearer, as you say, but then one's interest is faded, perhaps altogether gone. Benvenuto Cellini says, "Every man who has accomplished aught virtuous or resembling virtue ought to write his own life; but not to begin so fine an enterprise *till*

* Mr. Ballantyne had been a poor weaver at Paisley; by his own efforts he educated himself, learned to write with some effect, and became a newspaper editor; at Bolton, Manchester, Liverpool. In the year 1855 he published a volume of selected passages from Carlyle's Works, which reached a second edition in 1870.

he be past forty": this is Cellini's judgement, which however is binding upon nobody. I should say rather, "Let him not begin so fine an enterprise till he *feel that he is ready for it.*" A man, I think, is *ready* to write on a thing when he perceives that he has got above it, that he has shaken it off from him, and can survey it without egoism, spleen, exaggeration, or other perversion; for bad writing, what is it in any case but untrue writing, a writing of the thing which is not, painting of a picture which resembles not God's Truth and Reality but our own poor Falsehood and Hallucination? Stupid writing there is too, which does not even resemble a Hallucination but only a Stupidity and Bungling; like a canvas covered with lampblack and water; most melancholy: of that we speak not.—I say therefore, when one sees the thing as it is, feels that one has got *it* under his eye, then one can speak of it, on due impulse. For the rest, on this as in all other questions I have the greatest faith in a genuine instinctive desire. What you do in sincerity wish to attempt, what your heart will be glad in performing, that attempt to perform, then and there. Only be careful to ascertain that it is a sincere internal wish, not a superficial extrinsic one; for great errors are made on that head! Johnson used to say, "Read the book you wish at the time you wish it; the effect it produces is deepest then." I apply this rule to almost all things,—to Autobiography and your case; and find few rules so good, if one apply it honestly.

Thus my advice, you perceive, is mainly that you well advise with yourself. At all events, why not *try* the undertaking; you will then see best of all whether you have a call to it. The written record can at least do no ill, to yourself it will infallibly do good; and though written, it need not be printed

till you see cause otherwise. Nay I think at any rate it will do you no good to have the public much in your eye in writing such a thing; write what seems lucid, beautiful or significant to your own mind, and believe always that the public will adjust itself to that, or at worst that you can do nothing else for the public. Life in Paisley, in the workshops, at the firesides of the poor, this ought to be fully given; as a thing little known to readers, and a thing well deserving to be known —perhaps of all others the most important thing in these days: and as for your own feeling about it, I greatly mistake you if those young Scottish years, with their thrift and rigour and necessitous affection and endeavour, are not the dearest to your heart of all you have seen or hope to see. Let a man "stand always by his own order," I say! It is the oldest order of all; and derives *its* patent, as a great member of it said, "direct from Almighty God."

Do you know Thomas Ellwood's Life of himself? Gifford's (prefixed to the *Baviad**); still more *Jung Stilling*'s, translated not long ago from the German; and Eckermann's (Goethe's Secretary) which somebody said was inserted not long ago in the *Penny Magazine?* I mention these not as models (you must take no model), but as writings of worth each in its kind, which of course have more or less relationship to your enterprise, and are likely to throw light on it. Finally be honest, be single-hearted, modestly fearless, be not diffuse; and do your best and truest: I have no other advice to give.

This is a much longer Letter than I counted on writing; but doubtless you read me with patience, and are certain at

* William Gifford (1757–1826). The *Baviad*, a satire on the Della Cruscans, was his first work.

least that I mean to do you service if I could. At any time, if I can assist you in any way, it will give me true pleasure. If I ever pass through Bolton I will call at the *Free Press* Office; but that I fear is not likely.—Believe me always,

My dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 54

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 8th March, 1839.

My dear Mother—I am right glad to have this opportunity for writing to you again. It is a weary time since I heard a word from yourself now, a long time since I ever wrote anything direct to you: of late days I have been of mind to write a line to you even without any Italian news to go along with it; but here this morning comes the expected epistle from Naples, and now I have a call and command to write. How have you been all this time? What are you doing; what becomes of you in this bitter March weather; what is all Scotsbrig and Annandale doing? These are questions which daily arise; but to which I can shape no answer except by hope and by guess. Many a time does the shine of your little up-stairs fire in the winter night rise clear before my imagination, among the little specks of Light and Life (the dearest of them all to me) that the great canopy of Darkness covers; and I wonder with myself what you are doing even then. I can know only that both of us are under One's keeping, and trust always that He will do all things well. But really, dear Mother, you must write to me, write without loss of time. . . .

We are very quiet in general; yet the other week, Jane audaciously got up a thing called *soirée* one evening; that is to say a Party of Persons who have little to do except wander through a room or rooms, and hustle and simmer about, all talking to one another as they best can. It seemed to me a most questionable thing for the *Leddy* this; however she was drawn into it insensibly, could not get retreated: so it took effect; between 20 and 30 entirely brilliant bits of personages; and really it all went off in the most successful manner: at midnight I smoked a peaceable pipe, praying that it might be long before we saw the like again. There is enough of that at this season without seeking for it; enough and to spare. That day I wrote to Alick I was bound outwards to dine at eight o'clock (the real hour was nearer nine), and wrote to him in doleful humour on that account. . . . As for the Dinner itself I got through it, tho' not without damage sensible for several days after. It was one of the most elevated things I had ever seen; Lords, Ladyships and other the like high personages, several of them auditors of mine in the last Lecturing season. The Lady of the House, one Lady Harriet Baring, I had to sit and talk with specially for a long long while; one of the cleverest creatures I have met with, full of mirth and spirit,—not very beautiful to look upon. Between twelve and one I got home to my bed. There is but little good for me in all this; only a small proportion of good rather expensively purchased; wherefore I endeavour to escape it for most part.

. . . But now the grand object of consideration is, What are the Lectures to be, and When and How? I cannot yet say *what*, but I am thinking of it daily; I have decided meanwhile that there are to be but six, this year; it seems also that the best

time for commencing will be Tuesday, April 23rd; for three weeks after that, I shall probably be busy! So soon as I have drawn up any Prospectus and got it printed, I will send you a copy,—tho' you cannot attend me, I doubt! On the whole, I am not nearly in such a flutter about the thing, as I was in last year; tho' probably it will be bad enough when it actually arrives. However, we do hope to be borne through as before "with an honourable through-bearing." . . .

Goodb'ye my dear Mother for this time. You will hear from me again before long. I commit you all to the Good Guardian, praying and wishing from the bottom of my heart that a blessing may be on you all.

I remain ever, your affectionate son,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 55

To Dr. Carlyle, Naples:

Chelsea, 16 April, 1839.

My dear Brother—. . . My tidings [from Annandale] are always rather scanty; but one knows how they are situated, poor things. Jean and Jamie Aitken appeared to be getting on in the old favourable way. Austin, who has more work this year, was looking out for a Farm; but had come to no result at that date; Alick says, there will be plenty of Farms in another year, so wide is the ruin among that class. Jenny from Manchester complained, Jean says, of the wretchedness, discomfort and distress of Manchester; which acts upon their business too, and renders that horrid chaos unpleasanter to her, unpleasant even to Rob if he could see any outlook elsewhere.

The distress indeed I believe to be great and universal in this land at present; and some are beginning to predict now a *second* year of dearth, so bleak is our spring hitherto. Many thousands of operatives in the North are getting pikes and pistols,—poor wretches, their heart is bitter, their case is hard and hopeless. They have a "Convention" sitting here, but going fast or perhaps already gone to dissolution and nonentity, I understand. People ought to bundle that can; and leave a country where blood and confusion seem inevitable before very long. Enough of this.

. . . As for me, my Lectures are coming on! The first Wednesday of May I begin, in the old place at 3 o'clock, then on Saturdays and Wednesdays, till I get six Lectures done. The Prospectuses are out and circulating; I have given away fifteen tickets, I think; the number sold, still more the number saleable, is not ascertained yet. The subject is what I described to you: Revolutions of Modern Europe. On the whole my hopes are of the lowest; neither indeed was I *forced*, this year, to try the thing, having bread independently of it; however, it would have been improvident not to keep such a resource open. I shall be satisfied with a small success: nay, not dissatisfied with no success at all, for I believe I shall get lived otherwise, and the thing is amazingly disagreeable to me. Meanwhile I do not [feel] altogether such a despicable shivering of cowardice (the most insupportable feeling I ever had) as attended me last year and the former year: some way or other I doubt not to get through it; and perhaps it may be for the *last* time,—at least till I get some inward call to speak. . . .

Arthur Buller, returned from America and the Durham mission some time ago, preaches loudly the necessity of my

going to lecture in America: in all towns he hears from the best judges I am "the most popular author they have," I might "make a fortune" in etc., etc. To which I reply in banter and laughter. Yet if one could make once for all a couple of thousand pounds, and retire to the back of a stiff-trotting horse, to green fields, free air and one's own reflexiôns, out of this *Malebolga* forever and a day? I do not altogether reject the thing as I was wont; all manner of Americans invite me too, and advise me. Could one not write a dozen Lectures (I find I could quite easily), and hawk them like a mountebank for one time and no more in one's life? We shall keep it at least as a resource in the background, ready for any Autumn that may be ready for it. . . .

It is quite a new sensation, and one of the most blessed in that case, that you will actually be allowed to live *not* a beggar! As to the "praise" etc., I think it will not hurt me much; I can see too well what the meaning of that is, I have too faithful a *dyspepsia* working continually in monition of me, were there nothing more. Nevertheless I must tell you of the strangest compliment of all, which occurred since I wrote last: the advent of Count d'Orsay to compliment! About a fortnight ago, this Phœbus Apollo of Dandyism, escorted by poor little [Henry] Chorley, actually came whirling hither, in a chariot that struck all Chelsea into mute dazzlement with its splendour. Chorley's under jaw went like the hopper or under-riddle [sieve] of a pair of fanners, such was his terror at bringing such a Splendour into actual contact with such a Grimness; nevertheless we did amazingly well, the Count and I. He is a tall fellow of six feet three, built like a tower, with floods of dark auburn hair, with a beauty, with an adornment—unsurpassable on this Planet!

Withal a rather substantial fellow at bottom, by no means without insight, without fun and a sort of rough sarcasm rather striking out of such a porcelain figure: he said in looking at Shelley's bust, in his French accent: "Ah! It is one of those faces *who weesh* to swallow their *chin!*" His Mother's cousin was the Madame Crawford of the Rue de Clichy, where Marie Antoinette hid her Varennes coach, if you remember; he admired "the fine epic," etc., etc., hoped I would call soon, and "see Lady Blessington" withal! Finally he went his way, and Chorley with reassured jaw. Jane laughed for two days at the contrast of my plaid dressing-gown, bilious iron countenance, and this Paphian apparition. I did not call till the other day. I found d'Orsay out, or going out, and left my card merely. I refused to dine at Chorley's "to meet him" this week—mindful of my Lectures. I in fact do not see well what of good I can get by "meeting him" much; or Lady B. and Demi-repdom,—tho' I shall not object to see it once, and then oftener if agreeable. But the Lectures, the East winds! . . . Miss Martineau is off to Switzerland for five months to-morrow: she has published a Novel,* very ligneous, very trivial-didactic, in fact very absurd for most part; and is well content with it. The world rather arches its eyebrows; feels that "a Werter-Priestley in petticoats" is a very singular phenomenon. Good Harriet, there is such a lively dispatch in her, such a sharp *needling* compactness, one wishes her heartily well—at a distance. Jane is reading a scandalous Novel of Lady Bulwer's now; satirizing her husband, and all his set, Fonblanque, Forster, etc.: the world all abuses it, *and* consumes an edition of it in one week. She seems to me really to have talent, some-

* Deerbrook.

what like her husband's, *superior* for aught I see; rattles along, really in a most readable style, with a kind of pinchbeck brilliancy, and even slashes off a character in good caricature style. . . . I am heartily sorry for the poor woman, for the poor man. . . .

LETTER 56

To Dr. Carlyle, Florence.

Chelsea, 26th May, 1839.

My dear Brother—. . . Ah, Jack, I see now what the £30 meant! He [Alick] said you had instructed him before you went last year, to purchase a horse and gig for me, to render my stay in the country profitabler; that he had actually bought a horse (he did not say for what, but it was six years old, like Harry, only bigger and of a "dunnish" colour); that he thought he could get a gig, and wished to know what, when, and how, he should do in it! My dear Brother, what can I say to you for all this? It seems to me an improvident kindness, too lavish, too—but it is very kind. I shall think of it; I should but spoil it by speaking of it. If I have had my sufferings in this world, I ought to feel that I have had my consolations too.—To Alick I wrote instantly according to request, but knew not well what to answer. I said I had as good as determined to have a horse to ride on, be or go where I might; but then my coming to Scotland, still more my continuance there this summer, was extremely undecided as yet; wherefore as to the gig?—I thought on the whole if he found a suitable one *clearly cheap* he might purchase it, and "consign it rigorously to our Mother," for whom in her old days it might be useful, whom you would

like well to think of furnishing in that way. If nothing at once suitable and cheap offered itself, however, he was to wait till he heard. . . .

The Lectures as you infer are over; with tolerable *éclat*, with a clear gain of very nearly £200, which latter is the only altogether comfortable part of the business. My audience was visibly more numerous than ever, and of more distinguished people; my sorrow in delivery was less, my *remorse* after delivery was much greater. I gave one very bad Lecture (as I thought) the last but one; it was on the French Revolution, I was dispirited, in miserable health, my audience mainly Tory could not be expected to sympathize with me; in short, I felt after it was over, "like a man that had been robbing henroosts." In which circumstances I, the day before my, *finale*—hired a swift horse, galloped out to Harrow and back again, and went in a kind of rage to the room next day, and made, on Sansculottism itself, very considerably the nearest approach to a good Lecture they ever got of me; carried the whole business glowing after me, and ended half an hour beyond my time with universal decisive applause, sufficient for the occasion. . . . I am well rested now; I feel a disposition again to work. We shall see what the summer says to it. Meantime guess what immediate project I am on: that of writing an article *on the Working Classes* for the *Quarterly!* It is briefly so. I offered to do the thing for Mill about a year ago; he durst not; I felt a kind of call and monition of duty to do it, wrote to Lockhart accordingly, was altogether invitingly answered, had a long interview yesterday, found him a person of sense, good breeding, even kindness, and great consentaneity of opinion with myself on this matter, am to get books from him to-morrow; and so shall forthwith set

about telling Conservatives a thing or two about the claims, condition, rights and mights of the working orders of men! Jane is very glad; partly from a kind of spite at the *Blödsinnigkeit* [purblind imbecility] of Mill and his wooden set. The Radicals, as they stand now, are dead and gone, I apprehend,—owing to their heartless stupidity on that very matter. . . . But as to my *Working Classes*, it is not to be out till Autumn, that being the time for "things requiring thought," as Lockhart says; I shall have much to read and inquire, but in fine I shall get the thing off my hands, and have my heart clear about it. . . . I dined at d'Orsaydom, or Blessingtondom one day with W. Savage Landor, who called here since, and talked us all almost into syncope. D'Orsay is decidedly a clever and no bad fellow; he drew a fine portrait of me in the drawing-room, really very like. Countess B. I did not fall in love with; ah, no, tho' she is smart, goodhumoured, blandishing,—an *elderly* "wild Irish girl!" They have a fine library; Jane says I value my acquaintances by their libraries, and say or should say, "Such a one is a valuable man, a man of 3,000 volumes." . . .

LETTER 57

To His Mother, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 7th June, 1839.

My dear Mother—Some days ago these two Letters from John arrived. They contain little that is new, nothing but what is satisfactory; I send them off this morning, a morning later than I had calculated, having been busy of late days.

I have been writing an Article for *Fraser's Magazine*, but

for my own behoof, about a business connected with this new edition of the *French Revolution* now printing. You remember that story of the French ship of war that refused to strike to the English, and went down shouting *Vive la République*, and firing its guns? The story turns out to be an *entire falsehood:* I had some considerable correspondence about it in winter, and have made it out satisfactorily to be as false as anything need be. I am accordingly to contradict it in this new edition, and have put the documents concerning it into a shape for publishing beforehand in some Periodical: this was the Article for Fraser: I finished it and sent it off last night. That is one thing done. My other Article on the *Condition of the Poor* will be a work of considerable time and trouble; I have not got it begun yet; I have not even got any of the Books or Pamphlets for it: but I persist in meaning to do it; there seems a kind of *call* on me that way. I will put it in train now without further delay.

The Printers go on very irregularly,* and not so fast by far as they ought. They are printing the second and third volumes both together, they have done with the first. Their "steam-engines" break down, etc, etc. But it is a pretty enough Book, and they *will* have done before long.

Emerson writes to me again from America, about the "Miscellanies," about their 500 copies of the French Revolution Book. I find I shall not make so much as I *wished* by that adventure; but I must go on with it; the result will still in the end be profit, perhaps some £70 or £80. I sent off, through Liverpool, a complete *sheet* of the new edition, to this kind friend; that he might shew it to his Booksellers, and make the best

* With a new edition of the *French Revolution.*

bargain for me he could.—But the grand thing that seems to animate Emerson is the speculation that I shall go to America this back-end,* and lecture! His house, he says, is all brightened up into brilliancy at news of it; they will *nurse* my Wife and me, they will, etc., etc.: in fact nothing can be kinder than these good people all are. If I knew how much cash I could earn by American lecturing, I should see the whole business. But no one can tell me that. It is easy to go over, in these steamers or other ships, and easy to get back again;—but unless one earned money, to do one benefit for after years, it were of no use. One would need to set off, he says, in September; and lecture in October, November, December; ending at Washington the Capital. You think it a fearful thing, dear Mother; but it is one of the simplest things. Nor is it more *dangerous* than the average of what one does daily. A stock of spare cash, to keep the hawks out of my eyes a little, would be a decided convenience. We shall see, we shall see. It is all very vague yet; I perceive only that if I do not go, I must *fall upon a Book*, and decidedly find myself some new *work* for this season.

Jack you will observe, on the other hand, wishes me to come and meet him in Germany; and has even sent me £30 of cash, to bear my charges, if I will but come! Poor fellow, it is very kind. Jane says rather, I *ought* to go, and stir myself up; she will go to Scotland without me, or stay here, where she likes to be much better than I. Perhaps I ought to go? Except a sight of Jack, I have simply no wish to wander at all without solid business; I am far past the years for freaks of that kind, which indeed I never at any years indulged much in.—Mrs. Welsh *is* got to Templand now, tho' she has not

* Autumn, back-end of the year.

written to us yet. She seems to have been in much worse health at Liverpool than we knew at the time, and was actually in serious alarm for herself. She is clear that we should come to Templand. . . .

But I must end, dear Mother. You will hear soon what result we arrive at as to our summer movements.—Jane gets on better and better as the summer advances; she affectionately salutes you all. . . . Adieu, dear Mother, for this day. I hope to write again before long; I still trust to *see* you soon.

Your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 58

To Dr. Carlyle, Salzburg.

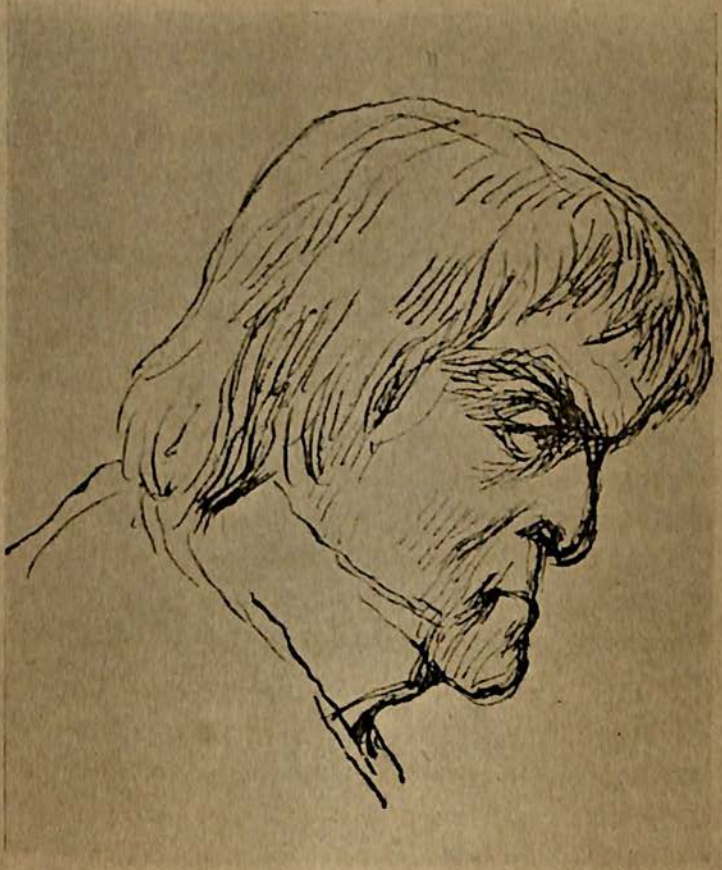
Chelsea, 20th June, 1839.

My dear Brother—. . . We are still in London, as you see, though the weather has now grown heartily hot in these last days. But it is clear and breezy withal, as beautiful hot weather as I ever saw; and now we do begin to make earnest preparations for departure. . . . And now, dear Jack, before explaining to you *whither* we mean to go, let me specify how imprudent it was, if you wanted me at Ischl, to provide a horse and gig for me in Annandale! My good Brother—; but there is a word in one of my Mother's poor Letters in her rough tremulous hand, "come while thy *Mother is still there,*" which sticks very close to me, which I even *dare* not disregard. So we are for Annandale; for Nithsdale rather, the whole of us, servant and all, and shall run between the two places as we see expedient. . . . As for Bookwriting there is at this moment

no very *pressing* call, I do think; my *opinions* lie pretty well uttered now, to my infinite relief, and I gladly see them making their way with unexpected undeserved rapidity in my generation; there is nothing in me now *burning* to get itself uttered. Let us thank God (O yes, after all our wretchedness!) and wait not unquietly. O me! the Moray-street* dames overhead, and all the base misery known and unknown that one has had, were probably the exact thing one needed to have. Courage, my Boy!

As to my "Article"† I must confess to having made hitherto very insignificant progress. I find myself totally in want of statistics in regard to it, and do not succeed easily in getting at them. I have jotted down very scatteredly some thoughts, etc.; I am communicating with Chadwick (hitherto without answer from *him*, he is in Lancashire) and with others; not hitherto to almost any purpose. However I shall and must get on. At bottom withal I find that it must not be statistics by any means, though I ought to know these too; but it must be utterance of *principles*, grounded on facts which all may see: an utterance of things difficult to utter articulately; yet many, indeed all reflective people, are longing to have them uttered. I mean to persist. Lockhart allows me perfect fair-play, the *Quarterly* so far as I can reasonably desire or expect is to be open to me: if my word prove entirely unsuitable, I am not to be bound to offer it there. Wish it well *written:* that is the difficulty. . . . American Webster is here too; I breakfasted with him at Milnes's, with Hallam, Sir R. Inglis, Sir Stratford Canning, etc.: you remember his [Webster's] picture?

* Edinburgh. Carlyle lodged at No. 3 Moray St. in 1822 and 1823.
† "On the Working Classes," afterwards named "Chartism."



SKETCH PORTRAIT OF THOMAS CARLYLE BY RICHARD DOYLE

A terrible, beetle-browed, mastiff-mouthed, yellow-skinned, broad-bottomed, grim-taciturn individual; with a pair of dull-cruel-looking black eyes, and as much Parliamentary intellect and silent-rage in him, I think, as I have ever seen in any man. Some fun too; and readiness to speak in drawling didactic handfast style about "our Republican institutions." . . . .

LETTER 59

To Dr. Carlyle, Duke of Buccleuch's, London.

Templand, Thornhill, 27 July, 1839.

My dear Brother—. . . We have been in this North Country some three weeks now or more; . . . I enjoy unspeakably the silent green fields with their peaceable cattle, and no cackling Cockneys visible or audible,—ah me, how blessed is the *soughing* [sighing] of the woods,' the ancient everlasting song of brooks and streams, compared with any human speech one can in general hope to fall in with! I find it as yet a sufficient felicity simply to be let alone.—Jane does not enjoy herself nearly so much; the reverse of me, she prefers London to all places; indeed she is not well here, and has no soul I think out of her own household whom she cares a farthing for. We get a beautiful drive in the gig when the weather permits; we came the other evening along Drumlanrig Bridge, an ancient most austere-looking erection, not above seven feet wide I think, with a great red flood just then tumbling far beneath it,—and Janè apprehensive, so fast were we going, that she should be canted over into the same; an imagination which haunts me ever since. . . .

For the rest, my idleness since leaving London has been as nearly as possible *entire.* I do not remember that I ever in my whole life was emptier of all strenuousness, or effort of any sort, of all meditation or purpose, nay of all emotion. My time indeed is totally clipt in pieces hitherto; I cannot get myself fastened at all. I have been reading a very little in Poor-Law Reports, in Wieland's *Horace,* in *Wilhelm Meister,* which latter Fraser proposes reprinting, both *Apprenticeship* and *Travels,* if the original Edinburgh Publishers do not object: Tait rather hangs back a little, Oliver and Boyd have frankly given way, as indeed they were bound to do. This is all *my work,*—up to this date! Conscience, however, does now begin to stir me very prettily in a dyspeptic morning before breakfast; I positively must and will *try* that Article of mine, tho' it is dark, dubious, questionable and even inane beyond any similar thing of mine I can remember. But what am I good for if not writing? I can see no reason otherwise why I am alive. In short we must and will set about trying! The stupider one is the more pressingly essential is it to try,—and to succeed. That Article on the Working people has been delayed two years too long for me; it is a feeling "sinking into langour of resignation" with me; two years ago it might have ended in "satisfaction of fulfilment." Enough of it here. Surely there is need of a word on the subject now if ever! Ecclefechan itself has its *Chartists;* they were rattling a very slack old drum, and shouting round the rumble of it, passing "resolutions" I suppose, last night I was in Alick's,—very curious to me to hear. . . .

LETTER 60

To His Mother, Scotsbrig

Chelsea, 8 October, 1839.

. . . The *Wilhelm Meister*, Preface and all, is now fairly tied up, and off to the Printer; so that I have nothing more to do with that now, except correct a few sheets. I am studying determinately whether I shall actually write that Article I spoke of, and how and for whom I am to write it. Work is indispensable for me: work I shall and will have. Meanwhile I go daily out to ride; sometimes into the Parks, sometimes over the River into the country, or somewhere else into the country, which is all very beautiful and pleasant for riding here. Sometimes I fall in with some friend, also riding; and then it is quite cheerful to go trotting together, through green lanes, from one open common with its whin-bushes and high trees, to another. My horse * is in the best order; it does seem to do me good: I will try it out for a while, and see what comes of it, dear though it be.—Jane longs greatly for her *side-saddle*, often lamenting that we did not bring it in spite of all. I tell her it will soon be here with the butter and oatmeal, all of which are wanted. She is very well ever since our return; and has a better outlook towards winter than she has had for some years back.

Did you get the Books yet from Dumfries? Perhaps they may just be coming for you *to-morrow*, which is Wednesday.† You will get some reading in them; you will read John Sterling's

* "Citoyenne," a present in June last, from Mr. Marshall, of Leeds.
† Market-day in Dumfries.

Article with interest. I have now been, I think, *sufficiently* praised: I remain the same unfortunate *in*sufficient "cameral" I was before; nothing, alas, changed in me!—Good be with you, my dear Mother. Take care of these sharp raw-frosty mornings. My blessings with one and all.

Yours from the heart always,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 61

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 24 Oct., 1839.

My dear Mother—. . . Generally every forenoon till two o'clock I sit writing; the hostler brings my horse to the door at that hour. Formerly I used to go into the Town then, and probably call on people, or meet people; not so now, I see nobody, even the people that call here I miss, for all calling is transacted, at least all formal calling, in these two hours which for me are riding hours. I cannot say but that this too is a relief and pleasure to me! Plenty of people come about me still; once or twice in the week somebody steps-in in the evening, and that is abundantly enough for me. I like fully better to spend the evening in reading than with the average of company. In the day excursion, the great towering trees, the green silent fields, the repose of brown October far and wide, with my swift little black mare,—is much preferable to any human society I could get. When I have written a tolerable morning's task, I feel entirely peaceable and content; when I have *not*, it is not so well, but I must just hope to do better next

day. What reason have I to thank a kind Providence that has led me so mercifully thus far! It is a changed time with me from what it was but a few years back; from what it had been all my life. My sore sufferings, poverty, sickness, obstruction, disappointment were sent me in kindness; angrily as I rebelled against them, they were all kind and good. My poor painful existence was not altogether in vain.—Every thing goes very tolerably well with me here; I have a prospect of being able to live now with less misery from terror of want,—that is the chief good I find in the thing they call "fame," the rest is worth little to me, little or even nothing. I should thank Heaven too that that was delayed till I had got grey hairs on my head, and could judge what the meaning of several things was. . . .

LETTER 62

To the Rev. John Sterling, Clifton Terrace, Bristol.

Chelsea, 25 Nov., 1839.

My dear Sterling—We hear bad accounts of you last week; how you have had *Bronchitis*, are meditating the possibility of Italy again, etc. I called next day at your Father's, for further news; but none had then come. I will continue to hope that it is but a false alarm; a necessary alarm, to keep you from excess of confidence, excess of work and movement, to which I know you at all times too prone. Keep snug within doors mostly, till the dry weather return; working with extreme moderation, reading light stuff, oftener than writing either light or weighty; then in the brisk dry months, on that western coast get yourself a horse, and go galloping about: that is my

prescription! I cannot afford you in Italy any more; you have work to do in England, I hope,—and will do it, if you can only remember that golden maxim, *Festina lente.* The Annandale Farmer exclaimed to a man he saw riding a certain Rosinante of measurable vigour: "Take time, my lad, ride at leisure! Thou may'st depend on't, the slower thou rid'st, the sooner thou'lt get to thy journey's end!" A precept I have applied a thousand times to myself; and have too often forgotten, never without penalty.

We see your lucubrations in *Blackwood;* always with pleasure. I rejoice in the omen of their accepting your *Dichtung und Wahrheit.* Let us hope they will find their interest to lie in going on with it. Would not a few notes here and there be of use to the uninitiated? I find the Translation good in itself, exquisite as compared with the generality of our Translations: a page or two of it I was at the pains to hold in close contact with the original proved to be grammatically exact almost to the last fibre; good flowing English too: but the *Goethe tune,* the last perfection of translation, was not fully in it; that will come by degrees. I translated Goethe some two years before I could discover that he had a tune; what indeed all mortals have. There is nothing of it, or next to nothing, in my *Meister's Apprenticeship;* in the other *Meister* I did get hold of it, not to lose it any more. For the rest, I will heartily congratulate you on being laid hold of by that man; he will not let you quit of him again till you have made out his wondrous secret, and learned from him what none else can teach you. A translator is properly a perfect *reader*; one never reads honestly till one tries translation: Goethe deserves such reading in a sense no other man of these ages can pretend to do.—*Theophilus* was

a beautiful portrait; such as the original deserved. Good Mr. Dunn! One will hardly ever see a face like his again in this world. But indeed the man's Life was a kind of Picture; not a solid angular Reality, with its contradictions, with its self-assertion, as other men's lives are, and ought mostly to be.

Compare *him*, for example, with *Sinner Saved!* Many thanks to you for these two books; which I read with many thoughts. A most notable Antimonian savage this "S. S." Poor brother mortal, deep sunk in poverty, coal-dust and every degradation and defacement; struggling withal to *be* a man, not the simulacrum of a man! I know few things that have more of a savage greatness in them than that last victorious vision of his on the pear-tree, and his running into the toolhouse, covering his head with his blue apron, to pray weeping as if tears of blood, God be merciful to me a sinner! We could not do without such men. Yet the man is a savage too, a gross base greedy-hearted plebeian coalheaver to the end of him. Never was a struggling sunbeam imprisoned in a stranger element, and bidden struggle there. *Requiescat*, the monster! By the bye, having a sudden opportunity, I sent off these two little books to my Mother, tho' I knew them to have been only lent to me; if you need them before they return of their own will, let me know, and we will fly to Aldersgate the cheap fountain-head.

Emerson's Letter was straightway dispatched ("Concord, Massachusetts, U. S."): there is not time yet, I apprehend, for an answer? I have heard nothing of him; indeed it was mine to write; and I have been too busy for writing to any one. Only last week I finished an astonishing piece of work, a long Review Article, thick pamphlet or little volume, entitled "*Chartism*." Lockhart has it, for it was partly promised to

him, at least the refusal of it was: and that I conjecture, will be all he will enjoy of it. Such an Article, equally astonishing to Girondin Radicals, Donothing Aristocrat Conservatives, and unbelieving Dilettante Whigs, can hope for no harbour in any Review. Lockhart refusing it, I mean to print it at my own expense; so in any case you will see it, and have the pleasure of crying Shame over it. The thing has lain in my head and heart these ten, some of it twenty years; one is right glad to be delivered of such a thing on any terms. The *Meisters* are coming out, two in one, in a few days.—By the bye, you understand the "Article" to be entirely a secret *even to yourself?*

I have seen almost nobody; I could *call* on literally nobody. The calling hour of every day, not a day of deluging rain, I have spent on horseback, in the Streatham lanes, in the Willesden region, in *our* old Hampstead courses—do you remember that day? Till this bout of riding, I never knew what a most lovely country of its sort this London region is. Green, frondent, fertile, entirely subdued to man; whatsoever all this in its utmost perfection can offer, without running water, rock or mountain, is there. The hectic dying beauty of some of the sun-glimpses I have come upon in my solitude are things to be enjoyed—in profound *silence*, you Knave! I am also greatly delighted with the country people, working on the roads, etc., down to the very children; and—rejoice to call such people my kindred. Unhappily the day after to-morrow I part with my horse; the mud having grown too intense for me. It was a present from a certain worthy wealthy Mr. Marshall of Leeds last Summer, this horse: his Son now pretends to "borrow" it from me, half-guessing, I believe, that I would fain be rid of it till Spring again. Kindness is frequent in this world, if we reckon upward from

zero (as were fair) not downwards from infinity; and always very precious, the more so the rarer. If I had Sterling now to gallop about with me in the warm weather! Why not, one way or other? It is among possible things!—Mill was not at home, one night when I called; I see or hear nothing of him these four weeks. I believe he is about selling his Review-*trade* to some similarly trading individual. No sect in our day has made a wretcheder figure in practice than the Bentham-Radical sect. Nature abhors a *vacuum:* worthy old girl, she will not make a wretched, unsympathetic, scraggy Atheism and Egoism fruitful in her world; but answers to it: Enough, thou scraggy Atheism; go thy ways, wilt thou!—My paper, alas, is done! There will be penny postage soon; then I will write oftener; a word almost daily. Ever yours, *mein Lieber,*

T. CARLYLE.

My Wife has got an ugly cold, chiefly by undue audacity (in the theatrical way!*)—we hope to see it go, one of these days. My Brother is still here: they call him John;—a more restless man than a certain other John I wot of; which is saying something! Miss Martineau is in Newcastle, ill for the Winter. Miss Wilson borrowed the Review Article; returned it in solemn silence towards *me,* as was fit,—in zealous approval towards others, as I hear. *Basta!* [Enough!]

LETTER 63

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 5 December, 1839.

My dear Mother—This being the first day of the *cheap post,* I determine on writing you a scrap of a Letter. There will

* *I.e.,* venturing too often to the theatre.

soon be an actual penny-postage, they say; but even this four-penny postage is a great thing. Were the penny system once come, I will expect to hear from you every week; I will write to you every week: we shall have such writing as was never seen before!

I know not whether Jean sent you out a Letter of mine from Dumfries. I told her there that I had got done with my "Article"; that all was going on tolerably here. The "Article" is indeed all written, nay I have added some things to it since; everybody approves of it; but how to publish it? has been the question. The Tory *Quarterly Review* people kept it for a week; and then, seemingly not without reluctance, sent it back, saying, "We dare not." Mill saw it next, and contrary to my expectation expressed himself eager to have it, and publish it in his *final* Number, as a kind of final shout; that he might sink like a *Vengeur* battle-ship, with a broad-side at the water's edge! But Jane and Jack, and my own feelings too, advise that the thing is too good for that purpose. . . . In short, I think of publishing this piece, which I have called "*Chartism*," which is all about the Poor and their rights and wrongs, as a little separate Book, with Fraser, on my own independent footing. Fraser will print it; halving the profits. It may be out, probably, by the end of this month. I shall perhaps get less money by it from Fraser, but its effect on the public will have a chance to be much more immediate. This year, for the first time, I am not at all *poor;* and can shift, whether I gain "Sixty pounds," or do not gain them. Let us be thankful, then; and publish, as we best can, what it has been given us to write as we best could! . . .

LETTER 64

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 30 December, 1839.

My dear Mother—This is to reach you on Newyearsday, if all go well, and Postie do his duty. There will be but a word of it; the expression of a prayer for "Good to be with you," which, expressed or unexpressed, dwells always in me, at *this* wishing season, and at all seasons. The happy fourpenny postage allows me to write, were it never so briefly. In some ten days more we *are* to have the actual penny-post! We shall then be able to write, did our sheet contain only, "how do you do, dear Mother?"—I inclose, on the present occasion, a small Newyear's present. I beg you to get with it whatever *luxury* you may have the smallest notion of: a keg of beer, a new gown,—whatever thing you like or can. I am not near you to choose the article myself: I can *send* nothing, except a scrap of bank-paper to *get* things sent with.—You may, lastly, take an old Newspaper and make *Isabella* direct it hither with two strokes (if all is tolerably right) when this arrives. It will be satisfactory to have some such token, and it costs nothing; Isabella will do it.

To-day likewise there goes off, round by Edinburgh like the last, a packet of books. A copy of the new *Meister* is in it for you; two copies of *Chartism*, one expressly for you, the other for "general circulation" among the brethren. Alick, I suppose, will read it,—nay James most probably will read it too! It can then be sent on to Dumfries, where they appear to be very anxious to see it. It came out only two days ago; the

Bookbinders had all taken to drinking about *Christmas time*, and could not be got to bind a sufficient stock of copies sooner. I have of course heard no opinion whatever about it yet; except from our own household here,* who unanimously vote rather in favour of it. To tell the truth, I do not care very much *what* the world say or forbear to say or do in regard to the thing: it was a thing I *had* to write; and, behold now, I have written it, got it written and out of me, and have for *my* part no farther concern with it at all.—. . .

I am in my usual order as to health; a little better, I think, perhaps owing to my diligence with the *horse* in weeks past. I work daily revising the *Essays* for the Press; I am in the last volume now, and shall then have very little *fash* farther,—nothing but correcting the Proofsheets where they *vary* from what I am now settling. It is a strange work with me, studying these Essays over again: ten years of my life lie strangely written there; it is I, and it is not I, that wrote all that! They are as I could make them,—among the peat-bogs and other confusions. It rather seems the people like them in spite of all their crabbedness. I had a most enthusiastic Letter the other day from Nottingham on the subject. I get enow of enthusiastic Letters and the like: but really as Corrie said, "What's ta use on't?"

Jack is as usual, on the other side of the door from me,—or rather I think I heard him sally out into the world a few minutes ago. He has bought you a Fox's *Book of Martyrs*, which I calculate will go in the parcel to-day; you will get right good reading out of it, I guess, and *plenty* of it.—. . . How are you all? Especially how are you, dear Mother? Keep

* Jane and Dr. Carlyle.

yourself well wrapt, keep a good fire! Also, why do you not write me a Letter? Why, I say?—Good be ever with you, and with one and all of you!

Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 65

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, Saturday, [11th Jany., 1840.]

My dear Mother—As my *first* penny-letter, and a specimen of what penny-letters may henceforth be, I fling off three words to you before the week be done;—in the greatest haste imaginable.

We are all stirring about, Jane very tolerably strong; Jack just gone out on his rambles: . . .

Chartism I conclude is come into your hands before now. *Lay out a penny* some of you, and let me know!—It goes along at a brisk rate here; greatly to Fraser's satisfaction. I send a review of it to-day, the remarkablest I have yet met with, round by Jean and Dumfries, indicating that they are to forward it to you. All is right on that side;—but I expect abusive reviews too by and by; which also will do *good* in the selling way.—We have got the first sheet of the *Miscellanies* put into type; a great feat, like the first stone of a house actually laid down, and the workers all gathered round it. I must not complain of the *fash* it gives me; but is is very *fashious* when one wants to be doing something better.

Your right good Letter came just the day after mine went. Thanks, many thanks, dear Mother! . . .

The sun is bright; I must out and walk before mist sink, and cold *rime* envelope all things. We keep a blazing fire, in spite of dear coals. Do you likewise. Tell Isabella to wrap little Tom well. Adieu, dear Mother, and all of you, for this day! Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

You saw I suppose the review of me in the *Spectator?* That other that is coming to you by Dumfries, I suppose to be by *William Hone,* whom Alick will recollect about. It came to me last night, addressed by an unknown hand.

LETTER 66

To Thomas Ballantyne, Bolton, Lancashire.

Chelsea, 24th Jany., 1840.

My dear Sir—Yesterday your little Book on the Statistics of the Corn-Laws came to hand. I have read it with great approval; it contains much truth in small space; the more that will familiarize themselves with these facts, the better surely for themselves and for all of us. I have not often seen a greater quantity of knowledge presented in as compressed a shape, or tending so conclusively towards its aim. Statistics of this kind are *not* "baskets of gravel." The difference between a heap of old buttons tumbled into a lumber-box and a *row* of the same articles sewed on one's coat at the right places, is very great!

The "Chapter" you find wanting in *Chartism* was left out with forethought; not because I reckoned it unimportant, but for a great many other reasons. For these two, if there were no more: *first,* that the abrogation of the Corn-Laws seems to

be the cause of the Middle Classes and manufacturing Capitalists still *more* than it is that of the Lower Classes,—whose wretched social situation, however it might be alleviated for a few years, could in no wise, as I think, be *cured* thereby, nor even, without other provisoes, be put more decisively on the way towards cure; and *secondly*, because this cause, whatever its worth be, *has* found a voice, and talks very loud without help of mine, while the great cause I was speaking for, the soul of all justifiable Radicalism as I think, and of which this other is but an outpost and preliminary, continues *dumb*, able to express itself only in groans and convulsions, and does need a spokesman. I must add too that the present Radical Members and Agitators, by their profound insensibility to the condition of the poor, and indeed to the condition of anything but their own interests and self-conceit, have filled me with a deep conviction that in them is no hope; that, for the cause of the Poor, one must leave them and their battles out of view, and address rather the great solid *heart* of England, the rational and just men of England, and avoiding all outposts and their inconclusive tumult, go right to the heart of the matter. Abolition of the Corn-Law is as sure to my mind, as six o'clock is when five has struck out of all the clocks and steeples. Abolition of the Corn-Law will very probably, as I compute, enlarge to a great extent the field of manufacturing industry for England; create, we shall hope, an additional demand for labour; raise the *economic* condition of the labourer,—for a certain number of years. That surely, even for the labourer's sake, is most important; *during* that number of years, how much, by a Government, an Aristocracy, *aware* of its task, might be done for the labourer! But by a Government not aware of its task nothing will be

done;—and in that case, I really know not that the final outlook is not even worse than we now have it. For, *after* the given number of years, *new* labourers, fresh floods of Irishmen, were there no other, [will] have flowed in on us, precisely to the present excess, and *then* we have no Corn-Law Abrogation to fall back upon.

For the rest, you do me nothing but justice in your notion of my opinion about the Corn-Law itself. I reckon it the most brazenfaced injustice and also the blindest fatuity we have to look at and suffer under in these days. It is almost ten years now since I have ceased to talk of it; more than ten years since I have heard any reason given in favour of it that was not a thrice-refuted delusion,—which, to keep my temper unruffled, I have found it good rather to step out of the way of altogether. Unjust I call it, and delirious;—alas, did the Aristocracy read their horoscope as I do, they would find some fitter work than wrangling for a Corn Bill! Unhappy mortals; doing no work, leaving the imperatively necessary work without so much as a thought that they are to do it; pocketing at the same time huge wages (all the land of England) for the work as if it *were done*, and clamouring withal for an overplus produced by obstruction, confusion, sin, suffering and starvation! They see not that before many years go, the question will be, not "Shall we pay such no-workers an overplus produced by starvation?" but, "Shall we pay them anything at all; shall we not rather fling them into outer Darkness, Chaos and Nonentity, the native parish of such?"—I tremble to look at these results; and find that on the whole there are *more* important questions than the Corn-Law, important as that it.—I may be said to hold my peace about it not so much from having nothing to speak, as

from having things to speak which there are no convenient words for at present.

These are some of my notions; which of course I need not tell you are intended, in that shape, for yourself only.—The Pamphlet *Chartism* finds loud but by no means melodious greeting from the public press. I see few of the "articles"; but most of them seem to accuse me of a leaning to "*Conservativism.*"* It must be so, Plato, thou reason'st well! The Bookseller tells me it circulates rather extensively:—if *among* the Conservatives, so much the better; your hidebound Benthamee Radical can get no good of it, except his temper disturbed, and gall-secretion put out of its way. Of him I had long lost hope; as at bottom the whole world seems now to have done, or to be doing.

I enclose you a leaf of the new edition of the *Miscellanies* they are printing. There are to be *five* volumes this time. What is becoming of the "Life" you were to write? Do not quit that.—With constant goodwishes—

Yours always truly,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 67

To Dr. Carlyle, Dungiven, Ireland.†

Chelsea, 6th Feby., 1840.

My dear Brother—Your two letters have arrived. I was right glad of both; of the first especially; for the wind grew so

* "I was rather glad they [of the *Morning Chronicle*] accounted me a kind of *Tory*,—Heaven send the Tory Party abundance of *such* Tories, now and in time coming!" (*From a Letter to Mrs. Aitken, 1st Jany.*, 1840.)

† Dr. Carlyle had gone to Ireland as medical attendant on an Irish gentleman of fortune.

loud that Saturday-night that I lay listening to it fancying you had either not gone, or must be tumbling about in great discomfort,—who knew if not in danger? It appears you did go, and were safe asleep all the while. Heaven be thanked that things went so well. . . .

I sit here all the forenoons; the visible or even invisible work I have done is hitherto very small. But it is good in all ways for me to be left alone. "Ay maistly works in a place by himsel'!" I shall have something more to do by and by; I ought to *keep* myself in equilibrium till the word come to me. One of the most palpably wise things executable by me, were the getting back of my horse; which accordingly I resolve to do before long,—the instant the roads and weather dry. I still merely read Norse Books, correct Proofs, and the like. . . .

My Lectures come into my head occasionally; I have no appetite whatever that way; but must perform, I suppose: probably the black *horse* will be one of the indispensablest performers in that! Such a life of wretched insomnolent dyspepsia as I have long led is enough by and by to make one sick of life altogether. Silence!

I have seen nobody of moment since you went. Craik was here last night; to whom enter Cavaignac: ineffectual superficial clatter was the necessity; infinitely inferior to my *Heimskringla*, which it drove me away from. Mazzini has sent me some wonderful books translated from the French of one Mickiewicz, a decidedly remarkable man. Fire, slaughter, Polish patriotism, Jesus Christ and Robespierre: what a time this of ours is! This Mickiewicz is a fierce royalist withal, a fierce royalist and fierce Catholic;—teaches Latin now at Lausanne. I also *saw* Mazzini yesterday; heartily sorry for him: he is to

come and dine here on Saturday. I think he looks more and more unhealthy.

To-night, as we learn suddenly, Hunt's play is to come *out;* and we have (alas for it!) to go and *assist.* I augur little certain except a headache: you shall hear how it turns.—. . .

You will write often; once a week at least: or why not once a day? This Penny-post will by and by introduce a quite new style of letter-writing. Finally my dear Brother, farewell for this day; and may *good* meet you in it and not evil. In the inmost part of my sick heart, I am always—

Your faithful and affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 68

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 11 February, 1840.

. . . There is an attack in it [the *Examiner*] on the "Condition-of-England Question," wherein the Editor, without naming me, does me the honour to be in a considerable vexation at the thing I have said, and set others in the way of saying! From a respectable house-dog, stationed there to bark in behalf of the present Ministry, nothing better could be desired. The people are beginning to discover (wise men as they are!) that I am not a "Tory," ah no; but one of the deepest tho' perhaps the quietest of all the Radicals now extant in the world; a thing productive of small comfort to several persons! "They have said, and they will say, and let them say," etc., etc.

Yesterday the idle portion of the Town was in a sort of flurry owing to the marriage of little Queen Victory. I had to go

out to breakfast with an ancient Notable of this place, one named Rogers, the Poet and Banker; my way lay past little Victory's Palace, and a perceptible crowd was gathering there even then, which went on increasing all the time till I returned (about one o'clock); streams of idle *gomerils* flowing from all quarters, to see one knows not what,—perhaps Victory's gilt coach and other gilt coaches drive out, for that would be all! It was a wet day too, of bitter heavy showers, and abundant mud: I steered, by a small circuit, out of their road altogether, and except the clanking of some bells in the after part of the day, heard no more of it. Poor little thing, I wish her marriage all prosperity too. . . . As for him [Prince Albert], they say he is a sensible lad; which circumstance may be of much service to him: he burst into tears, in leaving his little native Coburg, a small quiet Town, like Annan for example; poor fellow, he thought I suppose how he was bidding adieu to *quiet* there, and would probably never know *it* more, what ever else he might know. . . .

LETTER 69

To Dr. Carlyle, Dungiven, Ireland.

Chelsea, 15th Feby., 1840.

. . . A Letter of mine, besides the one you got, is probably arriving at Pellipar* by this time. I will write to you as often as you like. I have a notion of devoting *one day in the week* exclusively to answering Letters; the Penny-arrangement brings so many, it eats in upon one's morning not a little.

* Pellipar House, where Dr. Carlyle and his patient were now staying.

Yet a *word* any day is easily sent; and often well worth a penny! . . .

I did attend Rogers's Dinner, as appointed. His Sister was there; an ancient Lady, considerably more in *embonpoint*, and with less of wit than he. Of her came little. The dinner was in the first style of tasteful *classicality;* the company too not bad. Kenny at the foot of the table really pleased me; a most courteous innocent man, whose whole demeanour breathed patience, good-breeding, inoffensive sense. Milnes, *Hieland* [Highland] Macarthy, and Spedding formed the rest of the company. I decidedly liked Rogers a little better. His love of young people is itself a good sign. He defended the poor little Queen, and her fooleries and piques and pettings in this little wedding of hers; he defended Macaulay warmly, against Milnes's reports of Parliamentary failure: his old eyes were full of melancholy, the old grey eyebrows so serenely sad and thoughtful; the old figure was so spare and clean and *separate* (in all senses): I really almost liked the good old man. He is getting rather deaf, a sad circumstance. It may be said of him, with great emphasis, *he consumes his own smoke;* and I err greatly if he has not had a pretty volume of it to make away with, first and last! Poor old fellow I declare I like him. . . .

LETTER 70

To Dr. Carlyle, Dungiven, Ireland.

Chelsea, 27th Feby., 1840.

. . . My Printers proceed with tolerable velocity; above a half is now fairly done. Four or five weeks more, and I shall be out of that dirty vortex; a real deliverance for me. . . .

Gerade zur unrechten Zeit [Exactly at the wrong time] once again, comes on our old speculation of a Library here! Spedding has formally given in; I must take the matter up; Forster! Bulwer, etc., have agreed to act: it seems probable there will be a Public Meeting in a fortnight or three weeks, Lord Morpeth in the chair; and so with speechifying and advertising, the thing be fairly *tried*. I could have wished it at another season, had that not been impossible; for now I am beginning seriously to meditate my *Course of Lectures*, and have even, or seem to have, got the *primordium* of a subject in me,—though not nameable as yet. And these dinners, routs, callers, confusions; inevitable to a certain length in this mad summer quarter here! *Ay de mi*, I wish I were far from it: no health lies for me in that, for body or for soul; welfare, at least the absence of *ill*-fare and semi-delirium is possible for me in solitude only. Solitude is indeed sad as Golgotha; but it is not mad like Bedlam. "O, the Devil burn it, there is no pleasing of *you*, strike where one will!" *

On Sunday last, for example, I had to go to an eight o'clock dinner with certain Stanleys, whom perhaps you have heard me speak of; it was not suitable to refuse. C. Buller was there, Fonblanque, Bulwer, Campbell of Islay,† etc., etc. Poor Bulwer did not look nearly so horrible as that night when I saw him in the *green* light of Macready's cavern: he is decidedly human, nay has a kind of intellect faintly indicated about the eyebrows, perhaps too in the afflicted-looking large protrusive eyes: his appearance, adding the long nose and open mouth,

* Man being punished with the cat: "oh strike higher, strike lower!" striker replies: "O, the," etc.

† John Francis, folk-lorist, Gaelic scholar, etc., died 1885.

the dandiacal apparel, weak padded figure, and adventitious renown, is *tragic-gawky*. Poor fellow, he has his own battle to fight, like us all. He and I agreed wonderfully well, in the touch-and-go fashion; he seemed desirous to *engrush* [ingratiate] himself rather than otherwise. Fonblanque is an unproductive smart Town-wit; what he produces is like a pinch of snuff; good only for one minute; nay perhaps you were as well without it even for that minute. Campbell of Islay professed a "desire to be acquainted with me." I saw in him a broad Scottish man, with saloon manners, fat goodhumour; *va ben felice notte*. . . .

LETTER 71

To Dr. Carlyle, Dungiven, Ireland.

Chelsea, 2nd March, 1840.

. . . My subject for Lecturing on ought hardly yet to be *named;* lest evil befall it. I am to talk about gods, prophets, priests, kings, poets, teachers (*six* sorts of them); and may probably call it "On the Heroic." Odin, Mahomet, Cromwell are three of my figures; I mean to shew that "Hero-worship *never ceases,*" that it is at bottom the main or only kind of worship. But all as yet hangs in *posse;* perhaps it will evaporate yet; tho' it is daily in my head more or less.—Silence—till we see! . . .

LETTER 72

To Alexander Carlyle, Ecclefechan.

Chelsea, Wednesday, 8 April, 1840.

My dear Alick—. . . My horse has been in action these four weeks and more; I make her work when she is at it, gallop-

ing many a mile every day. My chief delight is to get *out* of the confused whirlpool with its noises, smoke and confusions, altogether; to see quiet cottages and fields; the clear green of Earth intersecting sharply the clear blue of Heaven. It does me real good. I study never to grudge the great expense; to think indeed that it is a profitable needful *commercial* outlay, which will come in again in the way of trade. For my Lectures are decidedly to go on. Next Letter I hope to send you a printed *Prospectus*. The subject is "Great Men"; or as I have named it, "On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in human History";—a great, deep and wide subject, if I were in heart to do it justice. Feeling clearly how indispensable health is towards that, I say always, "It depends more on my *horse* than on me," and so ride along with unabated alacrity! The Country round here is green, fertile, bright and pretty beyond what you could fancy. Not an inch of what we call *wet* or otherwise bad land in it; all broken into smooth leafy knolls with trim painted houses on them; or stretching in great fertile flats, of black, rich mould and dead level, laid out as kitchen-gardens for the monstrous City, as flower-nurseries for the quality who drive out thither. The faults are: There is no *clear running water;* there is no possibility of getting an *extensive* view. The very Thames with its boats and ships is like a drab-coloured long lake. The best view you have is that of London in the distance (if you be windward, as I always ride to be): monstrous London, filling half your horizon, like an infinite ocean of smoke, with steeples, domes, and the ghosts of steeples and domes confusedly hanging in it,—dim-black under the infinite deep of Blue.—

My Lectures begin on Tuesday, the 5th of May, and last, on

Tuesdays and Fridays, for three weeks. I am not quite so terrified this year; but I sometimes calculate, it will be better *not* to try it any more in future years; but to write rather, now that I *can* get something for my Books. We shall see.—The *last* sheet of my Printing* is just out of my hands, a few minutes ago. The Books will perhaps be ready for the 1st of May to go with the Magazine Parcels to Edinburgh: in that case I mean to send you all copies. It will be a pretty Book in five Volumes.

Nothing came of the Corn-law; but it seems the people have determined on bringing it on again this season. They mean also, in the interim and subsequently, to agitate and stir up all corners of the country by means of Lecturers, etc. I fancy there is no doubt at all but they will carry it; *when* or *how*, nevertheless, is but dubious as yet. One would say, it could not be very long. One would say also, it could not fail to give a great briskness to trade, and make the general population of Britain much better off *for some ten years or so;* but *if*, in these ten years or so, no steps were taken for improving and regulating the lower classes, why then, it seems to me, there would just be *more* millions of them, as miserable as ever, and no Corn-Bill Abrogation to fall back upon! The very delay in abrogating, nefarious, mad and self-destructive as it seems on the part of the Landlords, is perhaps *useful* in this respect; appointed by Providence to continue till the so-called Reformers do learn what Reform really means.

. . . Jane still complains a little; but ventures out now, hopes to be herself again before long. Her kind love to you all. Is *little* Jane learning her lessons well? And Tom, my respectable representative in the Village? Good be with

* Of the *Miscellanies*.

them all, poor things! To one and all of you, Good and that only!

Adieu, dear Brother,

Your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 73

To Dr. Carlyle, Dungiven, Ireland.

Chelsea, 19th April, 1840.

. . . What you say of speech upon any object *disgusting* one with writing or working farther on it, is eminently true. I feel it to be so; I have fallen upon a kind of plan in consequence. Daily for some weeks past, I have taken out paper, to be written upon *only on one side.* I there *splash* down (literally as fast as my pen will go) some kind of paragraph on some point or other of my "*Course,*" that has become salient and visible to me; paragraph after paragraph, till at least four pages daily are full: in this way I put down legibly, if not something that I shall say, yet something that I might and should say. I can clip the paragraphs out, and string them together any way I like. I am independent or nearly so of Reporters. I shall be the better able to *speak* of the things written of even in this way. It seems the best I can do. . . .

LETTER 74

To Alexander Carlyle, Ecclefechan.

Chelsea, Wednesday, 22 April, 1840.

. . . I scribble away at my Lectures; refuse *all invitations* whatsoever, till the Lectures be done. One can manage

without offence in that way. I ride too; I will ride and write,—what can I do more? This day five weeks it will all be over, one way or other; and I shall try *never to do the like again.*

Fraser has got the Book out; a very pretty green Book, in five Volumes ("Carlyle's Miscellanies"). He has been *subscribing* it (offering it to the Booksellers, to see how many they would *take* in the first place); he has begun that process yesterday; and was all in the clouds, poor Fraser, at the great speed he had come: "above twice as many as he had expected," etc., etc. Poor James is easily elevated, easily depressed.—I hope to send you all copies of this Book (if I can); probably by the Magazines: next month. . . .

LETTER 75

To Thomas Ballantyne, Bolton, Lancashire.

Chelsea, 11 May, 1840.

My dear Sir—There is no Newspaper that I know of hitherto which gives any report of my Lectures this year. I never either authorized or prohibited such reporting, nor have I in the present case; but left the "able editors" to do with the thing as they liked;—and this is the way they *like* to do at present. Their reasons I might perhaps conjecture to be rather flattering to me; but at all events the fact itself I find to be highly convenient. The fuss and uproar of all that puffery and reportery (worthy of the name of *butchery*) was in the utmost degree confusing to me; and it did not, as I suspected, and may now see, produce any result on the economical side to compensate for such confusion: we are almost a third more numerous this year than on any former year; and our Lectures

go on much better in quietness, as they might be expected to do.

A reporter of Fraser the Bookseller's does attend, and make a kind of Note or Draft of the business; a diligent intelligent man: but what can any reporter do? I have seen his "First Lecture," and would not have it printed with my name to it for any hire whatever. My only chance, if I persist in such a notion, and find I have strength left for it, will be to work the subject up by myself, and print it by and by as a kind of Book.

Lecturing does my health such mischief, and is every way so intensely disagreeable to me, that nothing short of compulsion, such as one may hope will not forever exist, can rationally drive me to it. It was a narrow turn of the balance that I did not decline such a business this year: and, with my present feeling, there is no hope dearer to me than that I may never do it again in the world. Four times spitted on the spear's point like a Surinam *fire-fly* to give light to the fashionable classes: this is enough of times! I shall be right thankful to get through it without disgrace, and cease shining in that manner.

If you come to London, you will come to Chelsea, and find a friendly welcome here.—In haste,

Yours always truly,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 76

To Alexander Carlyle, Ecclefechan.

Chelsea, 12 May, 1840.

My dear Brother—I write you a word this evening to say that my third Lecture is also tolerably over; a thing I feel

extremely thankful for. You will tell my dear Mother about it, whose anxieties after what I wrote to her last time are *not* likely to be wanting. I was upon Poets to-day; and got through not in any extraordinary way, but fully as well as I could expect. My audience had considerably increased; they sat very attentive, and seemed well enough content with me. I can assure you, I was right glad to get through on any terms! My former Lecture* which they call the *best* I ever delivered, was far *too good;* it shivered my nerves all in pieces; and I have lost about the fourth part of my sleep ever since. Nobody but one that had tried would fancy what a misery that is. Last night I seemed as if I was not going to sleep at all; I do not remember a more anxious feeling, about any such thing, than I had all this morning. And now it is over; and the *half* of the business, the far *worst* half of it, is over. I calculate, and Jane too is of that mind, I shall not try the thing at all again, unless I see myself in greater want than I was in this year.

. . . I cut a small hole in a card, and send one of the half-sovereigns the man gave me to-day as a present to my namesake Tom: let him buy a hat with it or what he likes, and wonder how London Lectures put a hat upon *his* head!

. . . Remember my Mother! You are to send her word directly. Be all well, and thankful with me.

Your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

*On Mahomet.

LETTER 77

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 15 June, 1840.

My dear Jean—I am a sinful man not to have answered your long good Letter sooner than now. Alas, now even, I can only answer in the hastiest manner: I have been and am very busy. I am endeavouring to write down my Lectures somewhat in the style of *speech;* as they were, or rather as they might have been, and should have been, and wished to be, delivered to the people. It is a new kind of task for me; and does not prosper as one would expect. The First Lecture, however, is down, finished off; I mean to do the Second at any rate, to begin it to-morrow: we shall see at the end of that how it looks. I determine on publishing the business somehow or other,—in America and here and everywhere,—by lecturing, by printing, or such other audible way as I have! The people do not know about it; and many of them ought to know. But I feel often as if I had better have made a Book of it in my own sovereign way, than *lectured* it off in that simple prescribed fashion. Perhaps;—and also perhaps not. We shall see.

I stay here; because I *am* here, and see not on the whole where I could get forward with my work much better. The heat has never yet afflicted me much: I have *outer* blinds, which are a great help; in very glaring days I stay in altogether till night. The horse is of considerable use to me; carries me out into the clear afternoon air, the bright greenness of the world; shews me how like Elysium it is. Alas, I know well,

if I were there daily and always I should care little for it. Except on compulsion I go little into the Town; call on nobody there;—they can come here, if they want me; if *not*, I shall like it still better. Our old wooden Battersea Bridge takes me over the River (a toll of one penny or one halfpenny renders even walkers *scarce* on the other side): in ten minutes' swift trotting I am fairly away from the Monster and its bricks; all lies behind me like an enormous world-filling *pluister*, infinite potter's-furnace,—sea of smoke, with steeples, domes, gilt crosses, high black architecture swimming in it: really beautiful to look at from some knoll-top, while the sun shines on it. I ply away, away, some half-dozen miles out; the Monster is there quite buried,—its smoke rising like a great dusky-coloured mountain, melting into the infinite clear sky: all is green, musical, bright; one feels that it is God's world this, and not an infinite Cockneydom of *stoor* and din, after all!

Our Doctor wrote to me on Saturday from Glasgow! He is there, or rather was there then, with his Patient, on a tour to the Highlands. . . . My dear Mother must be apprised of Jack and me; that we are well. Explain how busy I am—ah me! Send on this Note, that will be the best way; till I have another hour's leisure. Commend us to James, and *all* the rest. Good be ever with you all!

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 78

To Dr. Carlyle, Post-office, Oban.

Chelsea, 22 June, 1840.

. . . There was a paragraph of *blarney* in Aird's *Herald* to-day about the thing [his Lectures]; I sent it forward to my

Mother through Jean: I once thought of sending it to Oban; but I had already made up the *Tablet* for you, and fancied you had enough in that. It is got up by one Lucas here, a Roman Catholic, *cidevant* Quaker; he told me *I* had converted him! *Troppo grazia Sant' Antonio!* Do you remember the Italian old gentlemen who could not get upon his saddle, and who prayed to Saint Anthony, and then with a terrible effort went over on the other side? *Troppo grazia.*—

On Wednesday we are to have a Public Meeting for that Library affair. I apprehend it will be but flat; I have taken little trouble with it; I am to make some kind of speech,* along

*Carlyle's speech, as reported in the newspapers of the day, was somewhat as follows: "It does not become us, who are as yet only struggling for existence, who are merely nascent, and have nothing but hopes and a good purpose, to commence by casting any censure on the British Museum. Accordingly we mean no censure by this resolution. We will leave the British Museum standing on its own basis, and be very thankful that such a Library exists in this country. But supposing it to be managed with the most perfect skill and success, even according to the ideal of such an Institution, still I will assert that this other Library of ours is requisite also. In the first place, by the very nature of the thing, a great quantity of people are excluded altogether from the British Museum as a reading-room. Every man engaged in business is occupied during the hours it is kept open; and innumerable classes of persons find it extremely inconvenient to attend the British Museum Library at all. But granting that they could all go there, I would ask any literary man, any reader of books, any man intimately acquainted with the reading of books, whether he can read them to any purpose in the British Museum? [*Cheers.*] A book is a kind of thing that requires a man to be self-collected. He must be alone with it. [*Cheers.*] A good book is the purest essence of a human soul. How could a man take it into a crowd, with bustle of all sorts going on around him? The good of a book is not the facts that can be got out of it, but the kind of resonance that it awakens in our own minds. [*Cheers.*] A book may strike out of us a thousand things, may make us know a thousand things which it does not know itself. For this purpose, I decidedly say, that no man can read a book well with the bustle of three or four hundred people about him. Even for getting the mere facts which a book contains, a man can do more with it in his own apartment, in the solitude of one night, than in a week

with others. The thing seems really as if it were taking life. You will see some record of our meeting in the *Times*, I fancy. . . .

LETTER 79

To Dr. Carlyle, Oban.

Chelsea, July 15, 1840.

My dear Brother—Having this instant finished my *Third Lecture*, I set about answering your two Letters, both of which were, as always, welcome messengers; the last, I think, is the

in such a place as the British Museum. Neither with regard to Circulating Libraries, are we bound to utter any kind of censure; Circulating Libraries are what they *can* be in the circumstances. I believe that if a man had the heroism to collect a body of great books, to get together the cream of the knowledge that exists in the world, and let it be gradually known that he had such a Library, he would find his advantage in it in the long run; but it would be only in the long run; he must wait ten or twenty years, perhaps a lifetime; he must be a kind of martyr. You could not expect a purveyor of Circulating Literature to be that! [*Cheers and laughter.*] The question for such a person to ask is not 'Are you wanting to read a wise book?' but, 'Have you got sixpence in your pocket to pay for the reading of *any* book?' [*Laughter.*] Consequently, he must have an eye to the prurient appetite of the great million, and furnish them with any kind of garbage they will have. The result is melancholy,—making bad worse;—for every bad book begets an appetite for reading a worse one. [*Cheers.*] Thus we come to the age of pinchbeck in Literature, and to falsehoods of all kinds. So, leaving all other institutions, the British Museum and the Circulating Libraries, to stand, I say that a decidedly good Library of good books is a crying want in this great London. How can I be called upon to demonstrate a thing that is as clear as the sun? London has more men and intellect waiting to be developed than any place in the world ever had assembled. Yet there is no place on the civilized earth so ill supplied with materials for reading, for those who are not rich. [*Cheers.*] I have read an account of a Public Library in Iceland, which the King of Denmark founded there. There is not a peasant in Iceland that cannot bring home books to his hut better than men can in London. Positively it is a kind of disgrace to us, which we ought to assemble and put an end

most interesting I have had for a long time. Your feelings there at Oban, "looking over to the black Mountains of Morven," are very natural: I have often felt for you too, that money, if you could not turn it to some vital purpose, was but a poor remuneration, however much of it there might be! . . . Men are to be pitied for other things than the want of money. . . . You will find what does in verity seem your chief good; and then adhere to that, sacrificing whatever must be sacrificed to it; *not* expecting that you can keep both the merchandise and the price. I should guess too that the *silence* that you are kept in, even tho' rather dreary, were perhaps the best place for progress in this. It is with our own foolish heart that we have to sit in judgement. The faults of others, even when they work as injustices against ourselves, concern *us* little. We cannot mend them; what we can mend is elsewhere,—and is the only thing it will profit us much to mend! I can give you no counsel; I have counselled and criticised you far too much already, first and last. Not with an unfriendly feeling, no; yet with a too impatient one often enough. The heart knoweth its own bitterness; all hearts of men do. In such a case as this, more than any other, the patient will minister unto him-

to with all convenient dispatch. The founding of a Library is one of the greatest things we can do with regard to results. It is one of the quietest of things; but there is nothing that I know of at bottom more important. Everyone able to read a good book becomes a wiser man. He becomes a similar centre of light and order, and just insight into the things around him. A collection of good books contains all the nobleness and wisdom of the world before us. Every heroic and victorious soul has left his stamp upon it. A collection of books is the best of all Universities; for the University only teaches how to read the book: you must go to the book itself for what is in it. I call it a Church also,—which every devout soul may enter,—a Church, but with no quarrelling, no Church-rates—" ["The remainder of the sentence," says the reporter, "was drowned in cheers and laughter, in the midst of which Mr. Carlyle sat down."]

self. . . . Meanwhile let us not grow melancholy: I too am looking over into black dull mountains, where is little home or cheer for me!

My health continues very uncertain; . . . I am not equal to much work: indeed properly I accomplish *every* sort of work at the expense of a diminution of health. These Lectures are pure trash: I could write one of them straight on, if I had a *body* that would stand it, I take ten or twelve days to each; and get into violent extremes of indigestion, this way and that, by means of it. We cannot help it! This *Third Lecture*, which was far the worst of all as I delivered it, is considerably the best hitherto as written. The rest of the story too, in some way or other, must not be lost. It is not a new story to *me;* but the world seemed greatly astonished at it; the world cannot too soon get acquainted with it. . . .

Be quiet, cheerful, and love me always.

Your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 80

To Dr. Carlyle, 3, Cawdor Place, Oban.

Chelsea, 1 August, 1840.

. . . My Lectures seem to myself absolutely worth nothing at all. They looked ill as delivered; but wanting all the unction of personal sincerity expressed by voice and face, they look entirely dull and tame on paper. Whether they should be printed straightway will remain a question. There is small temptation as to cash. Poor James [Fraser] dare not risk any money; will go at half-profits, not otherwise! Indeed, as I mentioned to him, it is very curious to reflect that after all

this blaring of "popularity," etc., etc., the entire sum of cash I have got from *him* amounts to the munificent bounty of one hundred pounds Sterling and odd! By American friends I have had not far from £400: the *Miscellanies* (sold here, prepared there) amount to some £240,—even allowing James and the Booksellers £260 for their sublime function in the business! It is a concern worth noting; not worth talking about, for we cannot help it. Neither need we. Happily I am not likely to be in want of cash for any time visible yet. Much cash, I feel often, would do me no good. To buy Books, and without any anxiety keep a horse, were perhaps almost all the benefit of wealth for me here. With an independent stock of money I should indeed not continue here. But it sometimes strikes me of late that before long I shall be spoiled for any other place; and obliged to continue, money or no money. On the whole, I begin to grow more and more quiescent. The rule of heeding no *hearsay* of others, but minding more and more exclusively what *I* do like or dislike, what is really important for *me* or not for me,—shows many things in a new light. If I could have held by this rule from the first, several sad mistakes had been avoided. Alas, how can the whole world help one? The whole world had perhaps better never mind one. It may do its uttermost for a man, and *leave* him altogether poor, insolvent, and only *seeming* to be rich! I find in the British Empire astonishingly little that it would do me essential benefit to have. I sit in a sort of mournful inexpugnable acquiescence, and look at the green and paved world; really not very covetous of anything connected with the one or the other. I hope a new Book is ripening in me; that were the only blessedness; . . .

LETTER 81

To the Revd. John Sterling, Clifton, Bristol.

Chelsea, 9 August, 1840.

Dear Sterling—Yesterday, at my return home from foreign parts, I found waiting for me among several messages one which concerns you in some slight degree: namely "a poor lithograph," so Emerson the New-Englander calls it, "of Concord Battle-field and Village." Two copies of the thing had come: one is for me; the other, "as Sterling seems to be of more nomadic habits," I am to request Sterling to accept as a particle of the unexplored spaces where friends of his dwell and love him. The Print includes Emerson's Grandfather's house, "under the trees near the monument," where E. himself once lived. His present residence is not in the field of the Picture. The "Monument" seems to stand where the first English soldier fell in the American War of Independence.—I will roll the thing together, and leave it with your Address at your Father's. As a Print it is worth nothing; but as the shadow of a Friend's residence far over the ocean water it is worth something.

My surprising expedition, as you already guess, has been *accomplished;* I have "ridden into England," and am safe back! My course proved not to be towards Stonehenge, but to Leatherhead and thence to Herstmonceux and Julius Hare. My eyes and brains were as if roasted out of me by the blazing heat: I spent my days, astride of the mare *Citoyenne,* in unfathomable mournful meditation, speechless colloquy with the green pleasant fields and everlasting skies,—*voll Unmuth, Sehnsucht,*

Wehmuth und Verdruss [full of gloom, longing, sadness and vexation], and such other sable humour as goes with me everywhere, *post equitem sedens.** I often longed for Sterling; it is not good for the riding man to be alone. I loved Hare, and his pleasant dwelling-place; his good Sister-in-law was good to me: we saw the residence, now empty, of the late Revd. John Sterling, and had much talk incidentally (for *Blackwood* too arrived while I was there) about that singular Christian man. On the whole I have got myself horribly tired and burnt; but fancy I have laid up something out of my enterprise, and would not, for a greater price of pain, have forborne it. One gets nothing in this world except by tabling the price for it. My ride over and round Leith Hill, and through the woody solitudes of that region, was well worth a headache and heartache. I shall never forget some glimpses I have had there and elsewhere. *Ach Gott, mein Freund!* if one could speak like the Tornado, sing as the Spheres do, it were worth while breaking silence! I mention finally that I saw St. Dunstan's tongs, with which he grasped the Devil's nose; nay I struck on his anvil, and made it ring again, with this right hand. *Allah akbar.*

Hare is here to-day, preaching at Thirlwall's consecration I met Thirlwall, since his episcopation, one day in Pall Mall: he professes great reluctance, etc.; indeed I can well conceive the *Nolo episcopari* had a certain truth in his case. I think him a right solid, manful, robust-hearted character. We shall see what in these extraordinary circumstances he will do.—Fling me a line, if you can!

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

* *Post equitem sedet atra cura.* Horace, Bk. iii., ode i.

LETTER 82

To Dr. Carlyle, Oban.

Chelsea, 10 August, 1840.

My dear Brother—Your Letter lay waiting me here on my return on Saturday; I had heard word of it from Jane in the course of my travels. For my "travels," as you are to understand, have actually taken place, and been accomplished, tho' not entirely in the way anticipated at first. Cavaignac, when the day came, could not go. . . . .

I set off on Sunday gone a week; to Leatherhead where the Bullers live; meaning thence to go to Herstmonceux, on the Sussex coast, where Julius Hare lives, to whom I had written proposing it; from whom I had of old an invitation. The weather was sultry, dusty; I should rather say windy and fiery. I would have given five guineas to desist and stay at home; but I could not for very shame. I went off with my Mackintosh in front, my saddle valise behind; pocket full of maps, cigars and *etceteras;* my heart very much in the mood of Attila Schmelzle's, I believe;—right against the teeth of the blazing sun. And so I rode for a week all but some hours. I staid in the Bullers' neighbourhood till Wednesday morning; mounting Leith Hill, scouring the beautiful lanes, villages and hill-tops all round that region; waiting for Hare's answer which the cross-posts had delayed. Fortified at last with this document, I took the uplands for Reigate and the South, on Wednesday morning early: I had slept little or none the night before; I was in such mood as you may fancy. I rode all day; finding about eventide no reasonable-looking inn, I rode on, and on,

till Sussex was getting all asleep, and the very moon had sunk: finally after the stroke of ten I did find Herstmonceux Rectory, and was welcomed with both hands by the good Julius;—much to my mind, for I was well wearied by that time; having come, I fancy, something like fifty miles in spite of the ardours of the sun. I staid here one full day and the two nights: on Friday morning, Hare had to go and preach at Thirlwall's episcopation; I rode off too, directly after him, by another route,—that of Mayfield, Tunbridge Wells, etc.; I slept, or rather did not sleep, at Sevenoaks, a pleasant Town in Kent; got home next day by Dulwich (flying the dust-torrent of the white hot glaring highway); found all right here about two o'clock; and so have lain *perdu* doing little but rest myself ever since. Thank Heaven the tour is over. Many things dwell with me from it: the Weald of Sussex, Jack Cade's and the Norman Conqueror's country, the green, chalk hills, pleasant villages, good people, and yellow corn: it is all, in my preternatural sleepless mood, like a country of miracle to me. I feel it strange that it *is* there, that I am here! Want of faculty to sleep determines, more than all else, the conditions of such an adventure for me. Ah me, what unutterable deeps of mournful reverie, as you plod along through this fair earth, which for you will never be a home! I struggled to talk with all manner of peasants and the like: they are good people; their life for most part more supportable than I have seen it elsewhere. Hare has a noble library, a tastefully decorated house and life; wholly like a bit of beautiful crockery, fine but fragile. . . .

Farewell dear Brother for this day.

Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 83

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 25 August, 1840.

My dear Jean—You have just cause to think yourself unhandsomely dealt with by me! Why do I never send you a word since you wrote? Not one pennyworth of Postage-stamp, a few minutes of my time, and "Dear Jean, How do you do?"—Well; I will learn to do better by and by! I will learn to *send off* Letters containing the bare statement of the needful; there will never be *plenty* of Letters till then.—Alas, I am kept in such a fuss of writing (as trade) every day; and then at the time when I am not either writing or walking, there is such a stupidity, and sick laziness possesses me, I positively cannot stir my finger. To-day, for example, it is *after dinner;* I have written three pages, and walked to Hyde Park, in the smooriest* sultry weather: I write at present with the feeling that there is no man in Middlesex—with a greater desire to sleep than I! Take a word from me, therefore, dear Sister, and think it is all I can give to-day.

I have finished my Fifth Lecture, and fairly begun the Sixth. At the rate that it proceeds at, it cannot last much longer than eight days; for when I once get rightly *ill,* the writing goes like fire well *kindled.* I will finish these beggarly Lectures, then, and have them off my hand. After which I seriously think of taking myself away somewhither, for a week or two; *northward,* this time, likeliest of all. That is the essential thing to

* Smooriest (or smuriest), most stifling, suffocating.

tell you. I really have some hope now to get into the Solway or some other honest piece of Sea again.

. . . Jane determines to continue where she is; she likes this oven-Babylon; which is more than I do. But indeed what place *do* I like? All places, to such a sick wretch, are more or less afflicting. I shall find no right place, as I calculate always, till—!—. . . .

Yours ever affectionately,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 84

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 5th September, 1840.

My dear Mother—I have done with my last Lecture two days ago; and all is right here,—except the weather! It has got rainy again; not much to my detriment while on the pavement here, but much to the world's damage, I doubt,—and small invitation to setting out on a journey! I cannot yet tell what to do. You shall hear further from me in a few days.

I send you this sheaf of leaves partly for the Portrait of *Knox*,* which seems to me much the best I have ever yet met with of him. The face of a sorrowful, but valiant wise-hearted Scottish man. A twinkle of humour in it too; a most genial significant *snarl* if you urge it into telling its mind! I believe it must be very like him. My plan is that you get this Portrait *framed well*, as you can (at Dumfries or elsewhere) at my charge: then we will hang it beside Luther, as a memorial of several things. The other portrait you can keep or give away as you

* The Somerville Knox portrait.

like; they will be worth little to you, or to any one. The whole frolic-costs but *two shillings*, and is amazingly cheap.

Our acquaintances are almost all gone out of Town; what we can call friends are all gone "but about *one*." The evening goes pleasantly, over a Book; not much company that is as good. . . .

Adieu, my dear Mother!

Your ever affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

You may give Alick the *Ben Jonson* Portrait, if he likes.

LETTER 85

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 12th September, 1840.

. . . I have had wearisome Americans here: they are sent by kind friends, and I study to receive them as well as I can. They claim nothing of me but a little of my company, poor fellows! We had certain American *women* in the summer-time; they had come over here as "delegates," to discourse and speculate in a grand assemblage gathered in London from all the world to *civilize* Africa, and look after the black slaves. *Female* delegates were a class of persons the Assemblage did not understand, but rather *scunner'd** at, and finally had to reject. The good women were very angry; and determined to preach for their own behoof still; they themselves, in a meeting-house they borrowed. The audience met accordingly; the main female delegate got up to discourse, and, sad enough,—could find nothing to say, but sat down again in a very broken man-

* Viewed with great disapproval or disgust.

ner! People thought *her* also "gey idle o' Wark." Yet I think she was a good kind of woman. She had been here with us before that, she and three others, her bottle-holders; rigid-looking elderly Quakeresses;—terribly disappointed that I would not crusade with them in favour of the black slaves, as the one thing needful; I told them, as usual, that the *green* and *yellow* slaves, grown green with sheer hunger in my own neighbourhood, were far more interesting to me! I added moreover that I myself had been a slave all the days of my life; and had still a hard battle to fight, at all moments, to get any portion of my own just will made good. In fine, I did not hide from them that I considered their black-slave concern a business lying in *their* parish, not mine.

We have great work with *Temperance* here: ballad-singers satirizing it on the streets; on the other hand, rough earnest men, reformed drunkards as they profess themselves, speaking to great crowds about it on the Sundays, who listen very considerately. I understand it is making real progress. The very Irish, poor wretches, are abjuring drink by the million. I say, it is the *first beginning* of *emancipation* to them. I could almost weep to hear these poor rude workmen zealously calling on their fellow-creatures, in such way as they can, to awake into manhood, and abjure the slavery of Gin! They speak evidently from the heart: *this* is something practical and true they are talking of,—while nothing but *organ* psalmody and vague *jinner-janner** is going on all round them from those *hired* to speak. A Scotch Bricklayer in this quarter is said to be one of the most zealous: a head man among the Teetotallers from the North Country was telling us this Bricklayer's history, a

* Twiddle-twaddle.

while ago. He had sunk into tippling habits, saw his affairs gradually crumbling to ruin; his Wife made no complaint in words, but her silent sorrow maddened the man, as he thought of himself and it; coming home one night from the Tavern, mazed, mad, given up to the Devil, he determined to kill her: she was asleep with the child beside her; he took the carving-knife; had his hand raised to strike her,—when by God's great mercy, she awoke; the look she gave him cut his heart asunder; he burst into tears, into prayer; and considers himself now (for his worldly affairs are all prospering again) as consecrated by Heaven to warn his fellow-creatures as to this matter, by all means, in all places and times.—Surely we will wish these poor people prosperity more and more.— . .

LETTER 86

To the Revd. John Sterling.

Chelsea, 19 September, 1840.

Dear Sterling—Here are half-a-dozen Prospectuses,* which I beg of you to distribute, as you purpose, with all imaginable zeal. You shall have more, readily, on demand. It really seems to me that of our innumerable English evils there is no remediable worse one whatever than our condition as to Books in such a country as ours. Worse than Iceland; literally so! I met the new Bishop Thirlwall the other week; who warmly participated in my lamentations, and had engaged to himself (he said) that now in his new sphere he might perhaps succeed in helping to remedy such a state of things. It is positively shameful; worthier of Dahomey than of England. I, for one

* Of the London Library.

instance, have to bear this mournful testimony that I never in my whole life had, for one month, complete access to Books,—such access as I should have had in Germany, in France, anywhere in the civilized Earth except in England! Books are written by martyr-men, not for rich men alone but for all men. If we consider it, every human being has, by the nature of the case, a *right* to hear what other wise human beings have spoken to him. It is one of the Rights of Men; a very cruel injustice if you deny it to a man!

As to this "voluntary-principle" scheme of ours, I by no means expect that it will supply the deficiency; but it will do something towards that, it will begin doing it: a beginning must be made. An actual commencement of a Library, it seems, will get into existence this winter, and do what it can to wax towards completeness: the Clerk already counts 400 and odd; 500 once there, we start, with invocation of the Gods! Help us, what is in you! Could I but persuade you to write a fiery essay on the subject, to kindle the whole Island about it, that were something.

You are a lucky man to see the work of your hands lie on paper, hopeful if not "satisfactory." Let it lie till it cool; then, To it with the file and the *rasp*, and fancy yourself a very *Smelfungus* that preferred prose to verse! He that spareth the rasp hateth the Book.

Thanks anew for your love of the poor *Miscellanies*. No man ever yet "said" braver words than you about such a thing. It stands in print against you. To me it is inexplicable, inextricable, all that affair, now lying ten good years beneath me; the chief joy is that it is all over, off my hands, and may go *its* road,—Godward or devilward, I have no charge of it more.

My Reviewer of whom you spoke, is not Macaulay, as was at first told me, but one Merivale* whom I think you know about. He is a slightly impertinent man, with good Furnival's Inn faculty, with several Dictionaries and other succedanea about him,—small *knowledge* of God's Universe as yet, and small hope of now getting much. Those things struck me somewhat: first, the man's notion of Dumouriez's Campaign,—*platitude absolute:* second, the idea that Robespierre had a *religion* in that *Etre Suprême* of his,—O Heaven, what then *is* Cant?—third, that the end of liberal government was not to remedy "Hunger" but to keep down the complaint of it; pigs *must* die, but their squealing shall be suppressed! *Aus dem wird nichts* [Out of him comes nothing]. There is no *heart* of understanding in an intellect that can believe such things; a heart paralytic, dead as a pound of logwood! I was heartily glad to hear this heart was *not* Macaulay's; of whom I have still considerable hopes.

My Lectures are written out, in a way; but I do not yet decide for printing them. They are not *worth* a rush to me;—in fact I had said the whole thing already, tho' the people did not seem to have understood it then.

I am reading Puritan Histories Scotch and English; thrice and four times in my life have I tried that before, with inconsiderable effect. *Baxter's Life* was the theme this day; not so unreadable as the most. A kindly, clearhearted, clear-headed man; terribly dyspeptical too. It seems to me there is no great epoch known at all so buried under rubbish as this of Cromwell and his Puritans. I fancy I have got to see into Cromwell,

* Herman Merivale, Professor at Oxford of Political Economy, and later, permanent Under-secretary of State for the Colonies, etc.

for the first time, very lately, as one of the *greatest* amorphous souls we ever had in this land. The stupidities and curses of the world lie heaped upon him these 200 years: let us consider that!

You say nothing about winter and your whereabout; we learn with pleasure that it is to be Falmouth, not Italy. As for me when it came to the point of setting out, some two weeks ago, I decided on *going nowhither;* the preferable way I found of all ways would be to sit still,—tho' with many regrets. My daydream is always that I shall by and by get out of this inane hubbub altogether: a small cottage by the seashore, with Books, with Pen and Paper, with hills and a sky—*Ach Gott!* But the rule at present is, "Hold your jaw, Dinnish boy, and eat your pratees with it then!"

Adieu, dear Sterling; be a good boy, and love me. My wife sends many salutations.

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 87

To Thomas Ballantyne, Bolton, Lancashire.

Chelsea, 8th October, 1840.

My dear Sir—I am very glad to hear of you again, and hear nothing but good. Occasionally some trace of you turns up in the *Anti-Corn-Law Circular*, which they send me hither; but otherwise, for a longer time than usual, I have had to fancy what you were about. By the bye, who writes that *Anti-Corn-Law Circular?* He is a man of some emphasis; apt to get a little boisterous at times; but zealous, thoroughly in earnest, likely to be useful. I know not what progress the cause makes.

It seems to me many things between the Middle and Lower Classes will have to be adjusted before there can be any right settlement there. And who knows but the blind landlords, at their own extreme peril, are doing a *good service* by *delaying* the Corn-Law settlement till much else be once a little better settled? Small thanks to *them* for that! But all things do, in some sort, work together for good.

My Critic in the *Quarterly* is understood to be an Oxford Doctor of the name of Sewell, a notability and leading Puseyite there. I have known the man from afar for some years; and wondered, as he reciprocally does, to find how lovingly in many directions he and I went along together, always till we arrived at the conclusion, and how *there* we whirled round to the right and to the left about, and walked off like incompatibles, mutually destructives, like fire walking off from water! I do not like the Puseyites so ill as you do; in fact, though I think them as mad as anybody does, I might say I rather like them well. They have many good ideas, genuinely true, and sadly forgotten in our times; and the practical application they make of all these seems so entirely distracted as to be altogether harmless, and incapable of injuring anything except the Church of England itself,—for *which* institution, indeed, they really appear to me to be the fatallest symptom that it has ever yet exhibited. In one sense or other, it is true and must be forever true, that this world is a God's world, and must be governed as a "Church," or else ill-governed, anarchic, wretched. Too many cannot be convinced of this, all ought to be convinced of it. And then, as the next step, when the Puseyites come forward and say, Behold are not *we the Church;* is not Heaven's thaumaturgy with *us*, dwelling here under this Shovel-hat?—the world will

naturally answer, Let us see it, then; *work* miracles with it; or *else*, working none, go to perdition with it! I think that crisis is rapidly drawing on. The Puseyites will contribute their share of good; the Benthamees and they may well neutralize each other, and give us some solid result, the madness of each party being left as *caput mortuum* there!

My reviewer * in the *Edinburgh* seemed to me of a much more detestable school than these poor Quarterlies. He writes down this doctrine, That "*hunger*" is perennial, irremediable among the lower classes of men, here, everywhere and at all times,—the horse that will work is fed and lodged, but the man cannot be so; and all "liberal government," what does it mean but a joining together of those who have some money to keep those who have none quiet—in their hunger? The pigs have all to die, *no* help for that; but by God's blessing we will keep down their *squealing!* It struck me I had never seen in writing so entirely damnable a statement; though it is what all manner of Whigs and Benthamee Radicals, and other Atheistic men (as our Pusey friends would call them) do constantly act upon without writing it. Good never came from such people. It is to me not a sorrowful prognostic that the day of that class of politicians does in all ways draw towards its close.

You ask me for liberal political philosophers among the Germans. I rather think none of the great Germans have ever gone much upon political *philosophies;* I fancy even, they did not care much for that sort of produce. The great political philosophy is that every man be a real man, not an imaginary one; he will then whether as Tory politician or as Radical one say and do something useful! Richter and Fichte were resolute

* Herman Merivale.

Liberals (as we should say); Fichte even a loud one: whom many others, but not of great mark, have followed. The present race, of which I know but little, seemed to be of small moment; Sansculottists, Ballot-boxists, etc., etc. I suspect no help lies there for us in this matter,—except indeed as help does lie for the sick paralysis of man's soul in this epoch, and therefore help for all matters that man has to do with.

My pen to-day is obliged to go as for the King's Hundred. I suspect small light can lie in these words of mine to guide your inquiries; but rather darkness visible. Nevertheless I do mean what I write; and perhaps to make it all out and put it all together will be no useless exercise for your own thoughts.

It was a great pity you had not been a day earlier last year! We hope you will come again, when the time serves us better.—I have hardly been out of Town this year at all. I have been writing down my Lectures of last Summer; I know not whether I shall print them. I have an immense stock of reading about English Puritanism and Oliver Cromwell, laid out for the Winter. Till *we* become Believers and Puritans in our way, no result will be arrived at!—Believe me, my dear sir,

Yours very heartily,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 88

From His Mother.

Scotsbrig, 10th Oct., 1840.

My dear Son—I should have written before this but did not know where you were, nor do I know yet, except Alick can tell me. I have nothing worth writing only I am well, and we are all

in our usual way. Jamie has got his crop all cut and is busy getting it brought in; it is very good this year.

I must thank you kindly for your coal money, and may a blessing be on the rest, and may God give you His Holy Spirit to direct you in all your ways and be with you in all your journeyings whether by sea or land.

Little Tom is rather better but not likely to walk soon: the right leg is worst; it is supple at the ankle joint, but I hope it will come round with time.

I was much disappointed at not seeing either of you, but it would have been little satisfaction so short a visit. We must submit and live in hope. Let us pray for one another and endeavour to live to God's glory in our different stations: there are few who have so much to be thankful for; but I cannot put it into words.

You may believe me, ever your affectionate mother,

M. A. C.

Write soon and often. I could like a letter every day.

LETTER 89

To Dr. Carlyle, Beaumaris, Anglesey.

Chelsea, Thursday, 15 Oct., 1840.

My dear Brother, . . . We are in pitiful hurly-burly here; our poor tick of a maid Ellen * has all on a sudden fallen prostrate again, after a year's good behaviour, under the dominion of gin. The wretched little body gives us great annoyance; transforms the house into a squalor unfit for tinkers

* Helen Mitchell.

of average respectability; afflicts us too with regrets for her own sake, poor little wretch: Jane has lost nearly or altogether three nights sleep this week; she is out at this moment seeking a new servant; for it seems unavoidable that we must send this little piece of Distraction about her business with whatever regrets. Happily a relative of the creature's, a Kirkcaldy joiner not without sense, is here at present: we purpose to put her into his hands; and so wash *ours* of her. A most squalid business! But so the royallest cavalier must *stay* on his ride, stand kicking his royal boots, *cannot* get on, if, in easily conceivable circumstances a grimy Smith shall refuse to drive a horse-shoe nail! Till Griminess please to handle his hammer, Serene Highness must consent to stand unserenely there.

I am busy with Rushworths, with Parliamentary Histories, with Puritanisms and Cromwelleana. I see a long course of reading and inquiry before me: what will come of it we shall not prophesy as yet. . . .

LETTER 90

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, Monday, 19th Oct., 1840.

My dear Mother—Take a short word from me rather than none. Your dear little Letter has just arrived here; many thanks for it! Not one of them writes a more compact little epistle than you do, when once you have your implements about you. I am much obliged always by the pains you take; for it requires energy in you to take to writing: your writing-materials do not, like mine, stand always on a table, ready for seizing! . . . In Jamie's Letter, I talked of the household tribulation

we were in; owing to the accursed power of *drink* over our little *Teetotum* of a maid-servant. All was arranged for her having to go this morning at ten. The poor creature, however, looked so entirely broken down with woe, hopeless, silent, without any *tears*, almost without any words, that Jane, after serious consideration, determined to try her yet another time. It seems to me there is still a possibility, tho' the probability is small. She *may* last us a few months; she may save her own little soul and body: let her have a fair *third* chance! We have never had so "comfortable a bit useful creature" about the house. Cheerful as a cricket, handy, quiet, easily supported and dealt with: all *right*, if it were not that unhallowed malison! It makes one shudder at oneself to see what precipices lie close at the footsteps of us all. Let him that standeth thank God for it!——On the whole, however, the practical fact is that our establishment is once more *tranquil*, and I once more at my work: a most comfortable fact. Poor Jane has got herself terribly shattered by this week's tumult; must now try to *sleep*, and rally again. She will write you a Letter before long, she hopes, with all manner of news in it. . . .

LETTER 91

To Dr. Carlyle, Linton.

Chelsea, 29 October, 1840.

. . . On the whole I do not find that I make great progress in this new enterprise, sometimes no progress at all,—or even *retro*gress; that is to say, my interest in it threatens to decline and die! It is not tenth part such a subject as the French Revolution; nor can the art of man ever make such a Book out

of it. However we must hold on. One dreadful circumstance is, that the Books, without exception, the documents, etc., one has to read are of a dulness to threaten locked-jaw; I never read such jumbling, drowsy, endless stupidities: "seventhly and lastly!"——Yet I say to myself a Great Man does lie buried under this waste continent of cinders, and a Great Action: canst thou not *un*bury them, present them visible, and so help as it were in the creation of them? We shall see. . . .

Did you notice in the *Times* that Cavaignac has had a Pamphlet seized at the Press in Paris? One is much afraid there will be mad work by and by with these French gentlemen. Unless there be a fund of sense in the French Nation very different from what shows itself in the French Newspapers and printed Literature, one may predict that such Nation will fall into puddles before long, and ever into worse puddles,—to one knows not what extremity! They seem to me the vainest, maddest people in Europe, by far, at present. Like the man who "by the quickset hedge" (by *Bonapartism*, let us say) had "scratched out both his eyes," they are determined by the same quickset hedge to "scratch them in again!" *Faustum sit.* . . .

LETTER 92

To Dr. Carlyle.

Chelsea, 16 Nov., 1840.

. . . Jane has had a long negotiation with Fraser about publishing the *Lectures* for a sum of money down;* money down is a thing Fraser stands aghast at,—would fain make demon-

* See "New Letters and Memorials," i. 88.

strations, politeness, etc., stand instead of it: the negotiation has ended; the *MS.* has come *back*. Saunders and Ottley do offer me £50 for an edition of 750! There is happily no haste to publish the thing at all. I consider it a paltry thing; really care not if it were burnt: till some stronger temptation outward or inward arise, we will let it lie there. What a strength it is to have a little sum of money before one's hand; not to stand any more between the great angry tide of Beggary close-flowing in your rear and the open throat of carnivorous Booksellers waiting for you in front! . . .

LETTER 93

From His Mother.

Scotsbrig, 20th November, 1840.

My dear Son—I should have written long before now; but always put off: I come so ill at it. Believe me it is not for want of good will; as you are so mindful of me, so you are not long out of my mind. May God reward you for your kindness.

We are all in our usual way: I am spinning on the big wheel; it procures me sleep. Do you sleep well? I often think on you when I am taking my smoke at bed time. We may pray for one another, it is a great mercy we have free liberty.

Alick has this moment come in with your letter. I am glad to hear that you have got the barrel safe. I had a letter from John the same day I got your last. He has been mercifully preserved in his wanderings. I hope you will soon see him, if you are both spared. He has been very mindful in writing. Thank him for me, as I have not written to him for a long time. I think he did not get my last: it was directed to Bangor.

Mary* was over to see me lately. They seem to be doing the best they can. It was a great loss their having to take the crop: it has hindered them from getting the stock they should have had; but they must struggle away. They seem very diligent and thrifty. It is a fight at best, this world. We have all much to be thankful for. As for me I can never be grateful enough for the mercies I receive. We have a good minister here now. I go every Sabbath to hear sermon. May God give us grace to hear for eternity.

I will be very warm through the winter, if I am spared, with my new dresses. May God clothe the givers with the robe of the Redeemer's righteousness.

Thank your good wife for her letter. It will be a charitable deed if she can be the means of saving a fellow mortal from destruction.† May we be all in God's keeping.

Your affectionate Mother,

M. A. C.‡

Do not read too hard.

LETTER 94

To Alexander Carlyle, Ecclefechan.

Chelsea, 16 December, 1840.

My dear Brother—. . . Your news of the death of poor old Jenny Lockhart has opened all manner of thoughts in me;—

* Mrs. Austin of the Gill.

† Referring to servant Helen Mitchell.

‡ In forwarding the above letter to Dr. Carlyle, Carlyle writes: "We had your Letter yesterday morning; in the evening there came the inclosed beautiful little Note from my mother. I like her little Notes very much; cramp, stiff, yet rational, affectionate, even a kind of grace in them! In their poor obstruction they are very eloquent to me."

rather has given a form and direction to thoughts that, in one form or another, hardly ever quit me night or day. Poor old Jenny! I can remember dimly the time when we were running about as children; when she used to bake us small *rolls* in her bake-house,—things that she called "*nods!*" It must be not far from forty years ago. Ah me! One has no word to utter what all this means for us;—this strange whirlpool of a world, this everflowing stream of Life and Death.—At present, however, I remember that Jenny's Daughter Mary is living near you, probably in very great distress; I want you to give her that inclosed sovereign in the quietest way you have, and say anything that is sympathetic to the poor creature. She was a merry kind of child once; and she too has grown sad enough. One can do nothing for her. . . .

What you say of the Ecclefechan Library seems worth notice. The poor fellows will have to lay out Forty-five shillings before they can get my Book of *Miscellanies;* and then perhaps a good many of them will not understand much of it! Another piece of business, therefore, that I had with you to-day was to stop that enterprise of theirs if still possible,—with tidings that I will make them a present of a copy, if it be still time. I suppose I may direct it to you? Or to whom? It can be sent cost-free to Edinburgh; after which I do not well know the history of it. It will arrive some way without much cost. The only point is *if they have not yet irrevocably bought it elsewhere.* Pray inquire into that, and write me one word *immediately* about it; if you write immediately there will still be time to send it by the Magazines of this month, and it will arrive in the early days of January. I know not whether you yourself are in the Library? The like of that is good to encour-

age. Poor fellows! they shall have a copy of the Book, and my blessing along with it. . . .

LETTER 95

To the Revd. John Sterling, Clifton.

Chelsea, 12th Jany., 1841.

Dear Sterling—The one good thing I did yesterday,—swallowed, we may fear, by the mass of mischief one is daily sure to do,—was the hunting out of a *Strafford's Trial* for you; which feat, after a considerable chase, apparently growing desperate now for that day, I did at last accomplish at Bohn's in Henrietta Street. The old black Tome was to be delivered at your Father's last night. The price, 15s., seemed high; but Bohn refused to abate a doit. The Book is usually sold as the 8th volume of *Rushworth*, on which account they are shyer of parting with it separately. The *Strafford Papers*, which you already have, seemed yesterday a little commoner. *Faustum sit!* I wish you well through with the great Wentworth Tragedy. I have looked many times at that man; but except his stern mournful face and stooping gait, there is nothing that would become rightly alive with me. He is dead, and his cause: yet *might* perhaps be recalled to existence,—if one had fire enough in one's belly!

Browning's *Strafford* I have never seen, nor shall see. The man himself is not without good faculty; but dwells in an element of Charles-Lamb-ism, British-Museum Classicality and other Cockney encumbrance; out of which, not without a great effort, he will perhaps contrive to struggle.

We rejoice to hear of your health; to see the date *Clifton*. Do not be *too* liberal with yourself. This weather, snow-slush to

the very zenith, cannot be altogether good for you. Above all, do not work too hard. For your work's sake even, if for no other, remember always "Slow fire does make sweet malt." —Will not some chance bring you *hither*, the first locomotion you undertake? One may at least "*heave the wish*," as I once heard a Scotch Preacher say!

My wife has read your Verses; undertakes to tell you her opinion of them before long. My Brother was here for the greater part of these last two weeks: he is back to Ryde again; he speaks of hearing from you now and then.

Thanks for your offer of the old Sermons. Human fortitude is not equal to the perusal of them; but perhaps here and there some date, temporary sentiment, or other seizable trait might disclose itself on turning them over: if you have any conveyance, and no use for the stuff at all, I will take a look of it some time. My intellectual faculty is nearly extinguished by excess of stupidity in these Common-wealth Books. Literally so. Clarendon himself is a most monotonous, drowsy-headed "great man," moving like Milton's Sin in a frightful coil of Formulisms, and worse. The *Eikon Basilike*, had it not belonged to Cambridge Library, I would have burnt: God preserve me from ever again reading such a despicable piece of Phariseeism, nay of *Quack* Phariseeism, for the thing is palpably in every line of it an imposture!* May alone and Hobbes, of all these people, seem to one to have any *eyes*. Ah me, what shall I do?—Cease writing at present, for one thing!

Yours ever affectionately,

T. CARLYLE.

* This *Eikon* is now generally believed to have been the work of Dr. Gauden, Bishop of Exeter.

LETTER 96

To Dr. Carlyle, Ryde.

Chelsea, 26th Jany., 1841.

. . . In the course of last week I bargained with Fraser for my Lecture-Book. Seventy-five Pounds,—the dog would give no more; but he also gives a £75 for a thousand *Sartors*, the edition of that being run out too: so we go on printing *both*, with all imaginable velocity; and I am to have £150 for the two. We must be content. "Four sheets of each, eight of both" are to come to me every week: *credat Judæus!* I am very busy *revising* the Lectures; am now through the First. I design to make few changes. In five or six weeks I may fairly expect to be quit of the concern;—free for another. . . .

LETTER 97

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Fryston, Ferrybridge, Yorkshire, 11 April, 1841.

My dear Mother— . . . My kind Landlord here is a Mr. Milnes, a Member of Parliament and young Literary man whom I have known for several years, and liked much: such a blithe, kindhearted intelligence in him; I have always a real pleasure to see him in the whirl of London. His father and Mother reside here (it is some twenty or thirty miles off Hull,—or by another direction, it is perhaps some sixty miles *eastward* of Manchester). Well, "Richard Monckton Milnes, Esq.,

M. P.," etc., being, like others at this time, minded to have three weeks of "Easter Holidays" as men name them, set about persuading me to get into the Railway with him, and so here I am! We arrived on Tuesday after a very prosperous drive, divided in two by a night at Derby. The Country is different from London Country; it is a kind of beautiful, fertile Annandale;—most delightful to me to look upon at present. The people too are most kind polite people, and Richard is the best Landlord man ever had. I am lodged literally as if I were a Duke or Serene Highness: my *bedroom,* to take only one item, is 15 paces (45 feet) in length! Fires kept up all day, troops of flunkeys waiting to tie your shoes, etc., etc.; all this goes on to a length that seriously encumbers me. The people live in a great way, have quantities of company; I regret *nothing* here but that. For I wanted to *sleep* and be quiet; and my sleeping here is hitherto none of the best,—tho' my bed is some eight feet square, a perfect *sea* of down, which you mount into by a ladder. Alas, as Dick of Paddock Ha' used to say in prayer, "What's ta use o' a' their grandeur, when the flames o' Hell come and burn 't a' ?" That is too like the case of a helpless man in a sea of down! However, we have now got two horses, and are to ride forth like lions this very day in a few minutes: this I have no doubt at all will do me good. I am also about to make certain changes in my diet, and way of management (for they let me take my own way altogether, the good people): on the whole, I hope to have acquired the sleeping talent too before long. It will then be *all* right. Thus you see what I am about, dear Mother; this will score better than nothing for the present: you shall have another Letter in a day or two, I hope; the instant anything is settled about my future movements,

I will certainly endeavour to write. Consider me as admirably well off; a man only too well off!

. . . Here is another review of me in the *Manchester Chronicle*,* which I despatch for perusal among friends. Jane sent it me this morning; and along with it a slip of abuse out of the chief blackguard Newspaper of England: that I do not send *you;* tho', indeed, it is little inferior to the praise, if you understood it. But no praise I have got is like what Jean tells me of your greeting to read my account of Luther and Knox. My dear Mother! It is you that taught me to lecture in that way;—really so.—No room for more. Your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 98

To the Revd. John Sterling, Falmouth.

Chelsea, 13th May, 1841.

My dear Sterling—Any time these six weeks I have been fully and even eagerly minded to send you a word of remembrance, a word of inquiry; and yet till this moment, in so many weeks all of perfect idleness, it is never done! How the like of this takes place in private history, with a Penny Post all in action round us, and paper and ink not unattainable,—is a phenomenon which I will leave Philosophy to give an account of. Man was known long ago as a very strange fellow,—partaking much of the nature of the Ass.

About the end of March, being greatly broken by Influenza and long imprisonment in Cockneydom, I had decided on a run

* Review of the book "Lectures on Heroes," published early in March.

into the country; but found obstacles seemingly endless tho' of small moment; and so was sitting in the melancholy character of *Rusticus expectat*, when Richard Milnes (everlasting honour to him!) as it were lifted me up, carried me with him to Yorkshire, and set me flying. I returned only on Thursday last from a long gyration, which had included a glance at native Annandale withal; and am seated here in a small upper back-room in the Summer twilight at this date; a sadder and alas, *not* a wiser man! Friend John shall at least know authentically my whereabout; that will be one small duty done.—My life threatens all to go to rubbish here, if I do not look to it. The braying uproar of this City is distractive and destructive to me: and yet the question, How to keep what of really valuable I possess in it, and avoid what renders all possession nearly worthless? baffles my best endeavour hitherto. Patience,—at lowest Silence, and shuffle the cards!

Varnhagen von Ense, the beneficent, munificent man, has sent by way of gift a set of German Books, which I merely inquired the names of; these, such of them as turn upon Luther, I read for the present. Oliver Cromwell lies inaccessible, ever more inaccessible (like a Tower far up among granite chasms), the nearer I get to him. By what art or aid of Clio can any man ever make a History of *him?* Yet he had a History; as great as another's! Only the man to write it will probably never be born.

Or leaving History altogether, what do you say of Prophecy? Is not *Prophecy* the grand thing? The volcanic *terra da lavoro* of Yorkshire and Lancashire: within that too lies a prophecy grander than Ezekiel's;—and the "Church of the Future," its dome is the skyey vault; a much finer than St. Peter's or St.

Paul's dome! In short, the essential point is to know whether you will look before or after,—or stand like the ass between his two bundles, looking at nothing save his own stupidity!—And so, having got now into another sheet, I will quit all that embroiled disconsolate concern; leave it partly in the hands of the Upper and Under Powers.

My Wife has a copy of a little Book which Emerson the American has written for you (for you and me and others), and sent you a copy of to her care. I inquired again this evening, whether it was yet gone? She had offered it to your Father, had duly apprised you of it; but the little volume itself still lies *here*. I long somewhat to hear what you will say of it. Not for a long time have I read anything with more *profit*. I cannot so much say pleasure as profit: this man, for the veracity of the rude word that is in him, seems to me one of a thousand. I do regard him as the sign of a New Era in Yankee-land. As the last malodorous flicker of expiring lamps is to the first (cold) gleam of morning out of Heaven, so is Puseyism, etc., etc., to poor Emersonism, cold tho' it be. Well, you must read that little Book of Essays, and tell me if you do not find a right tone in it here and there.

The *Election* arrived here during my absence. All the changes I have noticed are improvements;—especially the change from dreadful illegible handwriting into clear print, is not that an improvement! Upon the whole there is real worth in the piece, *real* worth you observe;—and you will not believe me at all, when I say, and persist in saying, that there is far more of real worth, of real poetry, too, in the prose you have written and can write, than there is any clear proof of in this! Well, do not believe me; it would be a dreadful responsibility

if you did. It is amazingly difficult to know what to believe in such matters. A man has to read with all his eyes, with the best spectacles, and only makes out the truth approximately after all. Curious: there *is* a work which we here and now could best of all do; *that* were the thing of things for us to set about doing. But alas, what *is* it? A advises one thing, B another thing, C still more resolutely a third thing: the whole Human Species actually or virtually advise all manner of things; and *our own* vote, which were the soul of all votes, the *word* where all else are hearsays, lies deep-buried, drowned in outer noises too difficult to come at!

Adieu, dear Sterling; I must not begin another sheet. To-day at Milnes's there was due inquiry made for you among the lions, and joy at the prospect of seeing you before long. Good be ever with you, my Friend. Forget us not.

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 99

To His Mother, Scotsbrig

Chelsea, 21 May, 1841.

. . . He [Dr. Carlyle] has sat a second time for his Portrait by a strange machine they have got here, called Daguerreotype, which fixes the *shadow* of one (a small faint miniature image of one's very face) on a little bit of clear metal: the strangest of our new inventions, I think, and prettiest. Jane already got one such shadow from him; the other, I imagine, he means for you. Jane tried for one of herself; but it was "horrible" (they do not always succeed, or yet understand the ways of the thing): she will not go back, she says; neither need I go. . . .

LETTER 100

To Robert Browning, Care of Mr. Moxon, Publisher, Dover Street, Piccadilly.

Chelsea, 21 June, 1841.

My dear Sir—Many months ago you were kind enough to send me your *Sordello;* and now this day I have been looking into your *Pippa Passes,* for which also I am your debtor. If I have made no answer hitherto, it was surely not for want of interest in you, for want of estimation of you: both Pieces have given rise to many reflexions in me, not without friendly hopes and anxieties in due measure. Alas, it is so seldom that any word one can speak is not worse than a word still unspoken;—seldom that one man, by his speaking or his silence, can, in great vital interests, help another at all!—

Unless I very greatly mistake, judging from these two works, you seem to possess a rare spiritual gift, poetical, pictorial, intellectual, by whatever name we may prefer calling it; to unfold which into articulate clearness is naturally the problem of all problems for you. This noble endowment, it seems to me farther, you are *not* at present on the best way for unfolding;—and if the world had loudly called itself content with these two Poems, my surmise is, the world could have rendered you no fataller disservice than that same! Believe me I speak with sincerity; and if I had not loved you well, I would not have spoken at all.

A long battle, I could guess, lies before you, full of toil and pain, and all sorts of real *fighting:* a man attains to nothing here below without that. Is it not verily the highest prize you fight for? Fight on; that is to say, follow truly, with steadfast singleness of purpose, with valiant humbleness and openness of heart, what best light *you* can attain to; following truly so, better and ever better light will rise on you. The light we ourselves gain, by our very errors if not otherwise, is the only precious light. Victory, what I call victory, if well fought for, is sure to you.

If your own choice happened to point that way, I for one should hail it as a good omen that your next work were written in prose! Not that I deny you poetic faculty; far, very far from that. But unless poetic faculty mean a higher-power of common understanding, I know not what it means. One must first make a *true* intellectual representation of a thing, before any poetic interest that is true will supervene. All *cartoons* are geometrical withal; and cannot be made till we have fully learnt to make mere *diagrams* well. It is this that I mean by prose;—which hint of mine, most probably inapplicable at present, may perhaps at some future day come usefully to mind.

But enough of this: why have I written all this? Because I esteem yours no common case; and think such a man is not to be treated in the common way.

And so persist in God's name, as you best see and can; and understand always that my true prayer for you is, Good Speed in the name of God!

I would have called for you last year when I had a horse, and some twice rode thro' your suburb; but stupidly I had

forgotten your address;—and you, you never came again hither!

Believe me, Yours most truly,

T. CARLYLE.*

LETTER 101

To the Revd. John Sterling.

Scotsbrig, 14 July, 1841.

My dear Sterling—Your Letter reached me here last night; welcome, as all your Letters to me are. It is a long while since I have had a word from you; the hope that we might meet before I left Town came also, like many other hopes, to nothing. Pray write a little oftener,—especially while I am here, and have leisure and composure for answering! To-day you must be content with very little; a very little will not be without importance to you.

Know then that you have been radically misinformed as to my withdrawing hitherward at present; that your friendly

* In sending to Prof. C. E. Norton the preceding letter Mr. Browning wrote (19 Warwick Crescent, W., 13 Aug., 1885): "The first of the letters was written, as you see, forty-four years ago; and the goodness and sympathy which began so long ago continued unabated to the end of the writer's life. I repaid them with just as enduring an affectionate gratitude. It was not I who ventured to make the acquaintance nor ask the correspondence of Carlyle: his love was altogether a free gift, and how much it has enriched my life, I shall hardly attempt to say—certainly not at this moment, when I write in all the haste of approaching departure from home.—I thought the more satisfactory course would be to furnish you with the original letters; not mere copies: there is virtue in every dot and stroke." In a later letter (29 Dec., 1885) Mr. Browning said:—"I cannot undertake to write any account of our beloved friend at present: I feel just as you do respecting his misunderstanders, but am hardly able to say my whole mind aright just now, from abundance rather than lack of matter."

sorrow at parting with me may straightway console itself again! I have no thought of quitting London altogether, in the actual state of matters; I never had any thought, only vague rebellious impulses, blind longings and *velléités*. I do not think I shall leave London for a while yet! I might readily go farther and fare worse; indeed in no other corner of the Earth have I ever been able to get any kind of reasonable social existence at all; everywhere else I have been a kind of exceptional anomalous anonymous product of Nature,—provoked and provoking in a very foolish unprofitable way. Till once I feel ready for absolute solitude, which is not yet my case, I do not see where I could rationally hope to repay myself for what I should leave if I left London.

One fearful drawback there is: the thinness of the animal's skin, the sad unavoidable effect of London on his health! I am ill in all places; but a measurable degree worse always in London. What then? After infinite confused strugglings and deliberatings, I seem to have made out little more than this, That I cannot live all the year round in London; that I must, at this mature age, alter the whole habit of my existence, and become annually a locomotive animal; fly into the country in Summer time, as other Cockneys do! One still house for all the months of the year: this I cannot have in London; I must give up this, or give up London;—it begins now to appear to me that I ought to be a good boy, and handsomely agree to do *the former*, as so many other mortals do.—With regard to Annan our project never was to stay longer than a few months there: a mere chance, offering some likelihood of a house that might suit well, induced me to turn thitherward, instead of bending towards Sussex, Wales, or any of the other

azimuths: and accordingly here I am. The house however does *not* turn out to suit well, or to suit at all; after various searchings, not without difficulty, I have at last found a Bathing Cottage not far off which we are to take possession of in a week, for the month of August, thereafter to set out again on our Travels if we like; and this is all the settlement in Annandale hitherto. The name of our Cottage is, for the Postman, "Newby, Annan, N.B.";—pray remember that. Were the good weather all spent, the calculation is that Cheyne Row with its old bricks will hold us again: "I can't get out!" At any time of the season my present address (that of my Mother's house, as I think you know) is a safe one for me.—And so now you understand it?—

I am sorry, my Friend, to hear your despondent account of your health. Know this however for your comfort: that no man of your talent, of your affections, ever is in health; that the "uncertainty" you talk of, tho' sufficiently gloomy, is not perhaps the worst figure of ill-health. No, I tell you; there are others that I know of perhaps very considerably uglier. Besides if you will but take care of yourself, if you will learn that great art as you will have to learn it, the "uncertainty" will amazingly diminish; you will find a very handsome modicum of faculty still left at your own disposal. Believe all this, for it is true. One other aphorism I will give for comfort to you on another head, that of "Idleness." Do you call the wheatfield idle on all days except when men are reaping wheat from it? For shame! Learn to sit still, I tell you: how often must I tell you? All sorrow is the raw-material of thought. If you mean to write a new Book soon, see that you have been right despondent, as near hanging yourself as might be, for some

months before! Believe me, my dear Sterling, this also is *true* (if you will put it into proper language), and known to me by older experience than yours.

The day before leaving Town, I met Julius Hare in Burlington Arcade and spoke a moment with him. A good man, tho' an Archdeacon. Does *he* know *Strauss?* What you say of Hetherington's translating that, is new to me. An ominous thing indeed! But on the whole a thing we will not grumble at; a thing very welcome to do whatsoever lies in it to do. Of late years rapidly the conviction grows on me that all we have of *Anti*-Straussism is little other than a Cant,—properly a despicable trembling sort of Unbelief that there is anything intrinsically true in men, anything true at all except shovel-hats, tithe-pigs and such like! *Pfui!* I begin to see that it is at bottom sheer *Idolatria;* and should, and even must, go about its business the sooner the better.

Why do you call Merivale my enemy? He is no enemy of mine, poor fellow; but a good stout Sceptical Philosophist and Law Hack, to whom may the gods grant all suitable promotion. I saw the man once, many years ago, in Hayward's rooms, and even argued a little with him, and liked him.

Something else I had to say, surely,—but have forgotten it for the moment. Irrecoverable in this one instant, and there are no more. Adieu, my good Sterling! Do not forget me, nor I you. Adieu; commend me to your kind Helpmate, to the villain Teddy if he still remember me.

Yours ever truly,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 102

To Robert Browning, New Cross, Hatcham, Surrey.

Newby, Annan, N. B., 29 July, 1841.

My dear Sir—Lest you chance to have the trouble of a fruitless journey to Chelsea, and so be discouraged from coming back, I had as well apprise you straightway that your loyal-minded, welcome little Note finds me not there but here,—on the Scotch shore of the Solway Firth; I might say on the very beach, amid rough sea-grass and gravel; remote from all haunts of articulate-speaking men; conversing with a few sea-mews alone, with the ocean-tides and gray moaning winds! I have fled hither for a few weeks of utter solitude, donothingism and sea-bathing; such as promised to prove salutary for me in the mood I was getting into. London in the long-run would surely drive one mad, if it did not kill one first. Yearly it becomes more apparent to me that, as man "was not made to be alone," so he *was* made to be occasionally altogether alone,—or else a foolish sounding-board of a man, no *voice* in him, but only distracted and distracting multiplicities of echoes and hearsays; a very miserable and very foolish kind of object!

My Wife is here too, with her maid; a wondrous little cabin of a "furnished cottage," built as if expressly for us, has been discovered here; a savage of the neighbourhood even takes charge of a horse; Annan a sufficient little Burgh stands but two miles off, and yet our place is lonely (owing to its ugliness), lonely as if it were on the coast of Madagascar;—a place altogether as if made for us! Thank God, there are still some

places *ugly*, if that is the price of their loneliness!—We are to continue here for some four weeks yet; and do not count certainly on Cheyne Row again till the last hope of sunshine, perhaps in the end of September, have abandoned us for this year. Pray observe the date; and let us hope we may actually see you then.

The spirit you profess is of the best and truest: perhaps one man only, yourself only, could do much more for you than I who can do nothing, but only say with all my heart, Good speed! Doubt it not at all, you will prosper exactly according to your *true* quantity of effort,—and I take it you already understand that among the "*true* quantities of effort" there are many, very many which the "public," reading or other, can simply know nothing of whatever, and must consider as falsities and idlenesses, if it did. But the everlasting Heart of Nature does know them, as I say; and will truly respond to them, if not to-day or to-morrow, then some day after to-morrow and for many and all coming days. Courage!

With much goodwill,

Yours very truly always,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 103

To Thomas Ballantyne, Liverpool.

Newby, Annan, N. B., 16th August, 1841.

My dear Sir—The Conference of Dissenting Ministers on the Corn-Laws at Manchester, is to begin to-morrow, if I remember rightly; it seems to me a matter rather more than usually remarkable. If any good account of it, such an account as might in some measure make one present at it, come out in any News-

paper, your own or another, I should be obliged to you if you would be so good as send it hither. The Dissenting Ministers, if they had due insight and faculty, have an immense task to discharge at present. Could they leave behind them as dreary and inane the things that have become a dreariness and an inanity, and discern the huge reality calling on them in these days to give it a voice, it were something! I fear they have *not* faculty and insight; but I should like to see what if is they do. It seems pretty certain the Corn-Laws will have to terminate before long; but, alas, the business will only be beginning then. The dumb Poor have no voice; and must and will find a voice—other than Rick-burnings, Gun-powder and Chartism!

I continue here for another week; then still another at Scotsbrig, Ecclefechan, N. B., not far from this. It still seems likely that I shall pass through Liverpool on my way homewards, and see you there before long.

With many kind wishes,

Yours always truly,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 104

To Robt. Browning, Hatcham, Surrey.

Chelsea, 1 Decr., 1841.

My dear Sir—The sight of your card instead of yourself, the other day when I came down stairs, was a real vexation to me. The orders here are rigorous. "Hermetically sealed till 2 o'clock!" But had you chanced to ask for my Wife, she would have guessed that you formed an exception, and would have brought me down. We must try it another way. For

example: The evenings at present, when not rainy, are bright with moonlight. We are to be at home on Friday night, and alone: could you not be induced to come and join us? Tea is at six or half-past six.—If you say nothing, let us take silence for yes, and expect you!

Or if another night than Friday will suit you better, propose another; and from me in like manner, let no answer mean yes and welcome. At any rate contrive to see me.

Yours very truly,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 105

To John Forster, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Chelsea [December, 1841].

Dear Forster—I dare not promise anything as to the *F. Quarterly* at present: if I get fairly into that Cromwell, I shall have to go on, incessant, as a shot projectile, as a kindled fire, and not stop,—under penalty of going out altogether! . . . All that I have written hitherto has gone straight to the fire!— . . .

I have had nothing to do with Foreign Literature for a number of years past. Zelter's Correspondence with Goethe, an excellent Book now on hand, is the only one I have meddled with lately. German Literature in these newer days seems all to have run to threads and thrums. The French Literature of G. Sand & Co., which many people told me was a New-birth, I found to be detestable putrefaction,—new-life of nothing but maggots and blue-bottles. . . .

Speed to you in the thing you work on. It has been a real pleasure to see you visibly growing in all kinds of strength and

clearness of late years. "By working late and early," as the old song says, there is much possible. Nothing at all is possible any other way. Go ahead therefore.

Yours ever truly,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 106

To the Revd. John Sterling, Falmouth

Chelsea, 18 December, 1841.

My dear Sterling—Several weeks ago there came four copies of a new Oration of Emerson's, one of which copies I engaged to forward to you. They have all four been circulating about, from hand to hand towards their final destination, which they have now all except this of yours attained. This of yours was borrowed by Forster;* to whom I write to-day, requesting him to forward it, with the present Note enclosed: that is the secret of the unknown handwriting, which might otherwise occasion you a moment's surprise. Take it and be thankful.

I should like to know in full your deliberate opinion about Emerson: he is becoming a phenomenon worth forming a theory about. Did you ever see any Numbers of that strange Magazine of his called the *Dial?* I have the greater part of it lying here; and could easily send it by any conveyance you saw good to appoint at any time. You will be far from *entertained* in reading them: it is to me the most wearisome of readable reading; shrill, incorporeal, spirit-like,—I do not say ghastly, for that is the character of your *Puseyism*, *Shelleyism*, etc.; real ghosts of extinct obsolete Laudisms, Robespierrisms; to me extremely

* John Forster, of Lincoln's Inn Fields.

hideous at all times. This New-England business I rather liken to an *un*born soul, that has yet got no body; not a pleasant neighbour either! We live in a most wondrous "New Era," do we not?

Like a green islet in wide sandy wastes, these last two nights have been given to the Correspondence of Goethe and Zelter. How blessed in comparison to all I have read for many long months! Blessed as articulate human speech in the infinite chattering of apes, infatuated or superannuated persons, the wrecks and caricatures of humanity! *Patientia—sœpius læsa fit furor.*— One of the beautifullest things in that Zelter Correspondence, is the palpable fact of two elderly men *falling in friendship*, as it were falling in love with one another, and persisting in it *crescendo* till the lamp of life went altogether out for them, at the age of four score or more. It is a blessed fact; the blessedest I have got my eye on, for a good while past.—Do you know anything about the "*Herr Sterling*," mentioned there, who is said to have been the intermediary between Goethe and Byron, in those courteous passages of theirs?

I can tell you nothing about my work. It is miserable, it looks fruitless, a *mole's* work, boring and digging blindly under ground: my own inner man is sometimes very busy (too busy), but the rest is all silence. *Sileamus.*

Perhaps you noticed in some Newspaper that there was a speculation of having me made Professor at Edinburgh?* I

* A proposal by the students that Carlyle should be asked to occupy the Chair of Civil History in the University of Edinburgh. The Chair was practically without endowment, and for this and other reasons, Carlyle declined to become a candidate. Mrs. Carlyle expresses her approval of her husband's decision, in a letter to her mother, dated 19th December, 1841. She writes thus:

" Have you noticed in the Newspapers divers paragraphs about Car-

yesterday quashed all that. It was the work of some zealous-hearted young men: a thing not to be acted upon, a thing almost to be wept at.—Adieu, dear Sterling. There is no hope of seeing you; I send many a thought over to you.

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 107

To Thomas Ballantyne, Manchester.

Chelsea, 31 December, 1841.

My dear Sir— . . . Emerson's people publish quarterly a kind of Magazine or Review called the *Dial* (about the size of our monthly Magazines), at Boston; in almost every Number of which there is something of Emerson's, tho' without his express signature: he does not write anywhere else; nor has

lyle as connected with a certain Edinburgh Professorship now vacant? The students had got up a petition to have him elected to it, etc., etc. From which it is getting rumoured all about that he is actually a candidate. Nothing of the sort. He never for a moment has contemplated availing himself of the kind dispositions of these young gentlemen; and has answered their direct application to him on the subject with a decisive No.—'They would not keep him when they had him,' he says (not to *them* of course, but to *me*), 'and they may try whether they can catch him now.' Certainly the men of Edinburgh must have a tolerably high opinion of themselves to fancy he would give up his high position here for the *pleasure of teaching them!* As to profit, it would be all to try for,—this Professorship of theirs having no salary attached to it worth the name,—some £100 a year perhaps, with the fees that a popular Lecturer might take. But if he is to make his bread by lecturing, in an uncertain way, why not do it here, where he is already secure of an audience? or in America still better, where every one says he might make thousands of pounds in one year? No, no, we are done with Edinburgh. He owes it no gratitude for any recognition he ever found there. It is only now when London and the world have discovered his talent that they are fain to admit it. As for me, I would as soon go back to Craigenputtock as to that poor, proud, formal, 'highly respectable' City."

he yet published much of moment there. The whole Periodical however, is in some sort an emanation of him. It is edited, I believe, by a Miss Margaret Fuller, a disciple of his and of others, who goes into very high flights about Art, Self-sacrifice, Progress, etc., etc.: it is all of a very ghostly (not *ghastly*) character, and cannot one would think have many readers,—though some it has and ought to have. The London Publisher of it is, "John Green, 121 Newgate Street"; with whom I daresay any of your Manchester Booksellers could communicate.

You will surely do well to throw some light on that obscure and important question, The condition of the working-man in past epochs; not only what money-salary he got, and what he could buy with that, but (so far as possible) how he stood related to his employer, what constancy of occupation there was for him, etc., etc. I often say, Till the Employer and the Employed get some new *humane* relation, different from a mere *Mammonish* fatal relation, established between them, nothing but confused misery can await both; and all this of "Supply and Demand," and so much else, is true only for the time being and in a very limited sense. . . .

LETTER 108

To R. Browning, Hatcham, Surrey.

Chelsea, 1 Jany., 1842.

My dear Sir—If you happen to possess, among your Commonwealth Books, a copy of Heath's *Chronicle of the Civil Wars,* I could like to look at it for a while. It is a dim, close-printed scraggy old folio, not of the thickest; the author (who

wrote the *Flagellum* too) is a noisy blockhead; but his old farrago serves one as a kind of dictionary now and then. If you have it not, pray never mind, never regret;—who knows if that will not even be a kind of benefit to me! The stupidity of those old dead Books excels all that it has entered into the imagination to conceive.

With many true regards, and hoping to see you again in person before long,

Yours always,

T. CARLYLE.

You do not happen to have Dugdale *on the Imbankment of Fens*,—or any Book that will give one an idea of Oliver's locality two hundred years back?

LETTER 109

To the Revd. John Sterling, Falmouth.

Chelsea, 3 Jan., 1842.

My dear Sterling—A happy Newyear to you also;—and thanks withal for your many kindnesses to me! I am not worthy of you; yet I have you. Let us be thankful, let us be hopeful, and stand tightly to our work. *Ay de mi*, I wonder how people can ring bells at this season: I could rather chaunt Litanies; or go, like the Chinese, to "the grave of my Fathers," and sit *silent* there. God is great, and man is little and mean and a fool!

Cœur-de-lion shall be deposited duly where you have bidden. Cardalion,—*O tempora, O mores*,—is a hero of Shakespear's Parson Hughes!

The *Westminster-Review* Article "on the Corn-Laws" is but a Newspaper puff; which may the Devil reward. I did write a very insignificant Article, and publish it in that carrion of a Review; but it is an Article on Baillie the Scotch Covenanter's *Letters and Journals*, and has nothing to do with any Corn-Laws; one paragraph only the wretched Editor I suppose has clipt out, and sent circulating thro' the Newspapers. After all, be it so! I do not know but the *Divine Right of Squires* may actually come to require treatment by me; it is one of the most portentous and momentous questions struggling into articulation in these days.

The Article has nothing in it to attract you, except perhaps an extract about *Strafford's Trial*, which is really notable; which I meant to tell you of ever since the Book came into my hands, three months ago: nay far longer ago than that; for I have known the *old* edition of the Book this great while; but I always hesitated to mention it to you, lest the impossibility of getting it (for such there was) might only vex you. David Laing of Edinburgh, the new Editor, is a skilful man, and has more than once obliged me. I wrote this Article partly for his sake, partly to bring my own hand in.—If you now think *Baillie* worth carrying to Falmouth, I can right willingly set him under way; the Book is my own, and I have no immediate need of it. Would to Heaven I had!

Does John Mill ever write to you? It is something like four months since I last saw him, and then in his own house one evening,—very busy with a Book on Logic.

This paper is made of *plaster of Paris;* wherefore I am forced to write on it with a steel pen altogether afflicting to me. *Sit finis.*

May this year be better for us than the last was. May *we* shew ourselves better; truer, braver, humbler: that is the right good!

My Wife, stepping in at this moment, sends you many kind salutations. Good be with you always, my dear Friend.

Yours affectionately,

T. CARLYLE.

I have got an admirable Portrait of Milton by Cooper; far the best face of him ever drawn. Molteno sells it in Pall Mall for 5/- Sir J. Reynolds got it engraved about 50 years ago, and successfully defended its authenticity.*

LETTER 110

To the Revd. John Sterling, Falmouth.

Chelsea, [12 Jany., 1842.]

Dear Sterling—Your *Strafford* has arrived; I announce this fact, because both the Packets had given way at the end, the too weak paper having burst; and your MS. ran a great risk of being scattered out into the general Mailbags and tragically lost!—I will read it so soon as I can command the smallest leisure for the purpose. My vote too you shall have *taliter qualiter;* vote of the greatest enemy "the legitimate drama" now has.

Poor Calvert's † death, which I had not heard of before, is heavy news to me. An innocent sincere soul, macerated in

* It is now generally thought that Sir Joshua was misled and that his "Milton" is most likely a portrait of Selden.

† Dr. Calvert, Sterling's faithful friend and fellow-traveller.

sore sufferings, we hope purified in them, is gone to its long rest.

My studies in the *Civil War* threaten to be bottomless. The character of Oliver Cromwell comes before me clearer and clearer, as of a great man, almost as of a kind of god: but the means of representing it? There is the rub. It lies buried under two centuries of quackeries, scepticisms, owleries,—*not* resuscitable; unless you could tear up the roots of the actual British world along with it! Besides I am in very poor health of body; how can I take such a thing in my arms, and rend the secret out of it? I have an unhappy talent for fixing on the impossible.

In the last *Quarterly* you will read a very wholesome Sermon by Henry Taylor, with Wordsworth's Sonnets for text. The Sermon is good, a real Sermon: but the inspired volume of Sonnets—*ach Gott!*—I have also read Richard Milnes's *One Tract More.* We do live in bewildered, benighted, ghost-ridden times.

Adieu. The iron pen is still sore on me; but I am making efforts to get *real* rag-paper (not imaginary ass-skin) and a goose-quill again.

Yours ever,

T. C.

LETTER 111

To the Revd. John Sterling, Falmouth.

Chelsea, 20 Jan., 1842.

Dear Sterling—Accept a brief, and I doubt you will think, very crabbed verdict about *Strafford,* from one who loves you, and unwillingly shows you the contradictory points he has.

From a photo. by John Patrick, autumn, 1874

DR. CARLYLE, THOMAS CARLYLE, MISS M. C. AITKEN AND MR. P. SWAN

A verdict means a *vere-dictum;* the *vere* is all that can be required of it, and the rest a thing you yourself will easily manage.

I have read this *Strafford* without difficulty; a fact which to you, who know my impatience of manuscript, will already mean something. Indeed throughout there is so much of gracefulness, ingenuity, and *un*hideable Sterlingism that were the Piece once well *printed,* clear and handsome to the eye, I should think most persons of taste and faculty would vote that it might be *read* without great trouble! But this is not all you want,—very far from it; and this unfortunately is almost all that I can say.

My judgement about the Drama generally, I am conscious, must be worth little to Dramatic Writers; for actually, always in glancing into the business, with any eye to practice, it has seemed to me as if the Drama in these times were about *impossible.*! . . . My voice therefore need not go for more with you than it is worth. If I vote that it seems to me very questionable indeed to print this *Strafford,* and impossible to act it, you can let me vote.

In fact I may say I like this worse than any of your Poems; that is to say, it is more repulsive to me to accept this, with its aims and its result as a fair emblem of Sterling's talent;—and in fact, whatever others do, I for one will not!

There is surely far too little action in the Play; far too little probability in it; far too—in short, why should I go on? It is not a credible image of Strafford and his Environment; neither directly nor emblematically can I find it really *true enough* for Sterling to have written! Of "*legitimate drammars*" * and such like I say nothing; but this is Sterling's emblematic image of

* See "New Letters and Memorials," i. 131, n.

Strafford and the breaking out of the Puritan Wars; and as such I have infinite objections to sustain it. Above nine-tenths of the work seem to me fairly unworthy of the workman. The representation of the men and of the things is not interesting; nor is it in any sense conformable to the *truth.* I find little that contents me, if it be not, in some measure, the burlesque passages, and certain detached speeches,—most of all that fair Carlisle's valediction to the poor King Charles, which almost alone of the whole Play got into some proximity with this hard heart of mine. In fact there is something very good in the character of this Distinguished Female; Strafford too has his emphasis, his force,—tho' I cannot find him to be *true:* but in the rest of the characters I find, alas, little but disappointment. They are untrue to History; but in fact they are not painted at all,—at least, not by action; which is the only dramatic way of painting.—In a word, my dear Sterling, I *do not like this Strafford;* verily not; and this, I suppose, is all you were wanting to know of me, all that it can be suitable for me to say at present.

I continually pray to Heaven (in a secret way) that you would return to honest *Prose,* in which as I do seriously believe you are ten times more *poetical* than in that singing without any tune, to an audience without ear, you will ever make yourself! And yet not my will, but thy will be done.—And so God help us all, for we have a horrible time of it!

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 112

To the Revd. John Sterling, Falmouth.

Chelsea, 26 Jany., 1842.

My dear Sterling—Your Letter does you infinite honour, and me far too much. It is rare indeed to see a man capable of balancing himself between two such noble antagonisms; animated by such a wish to please, and such a patience in not pleasing. Courage! Such a spirit conquers many difficulties, conquers all difficulties, if it can endure. I said to myself: "Such a Letter is worth half a dozen of the best Dramas going,—and does point towards good Dramas in the distance yet, or else still better things."

I also entirely respect your persistence in your own firm purpose in spite of all cavils of mine: what else can you persist in? The inward voice, if it be an *in*ward one, and not some false echo of mere *outer* ones, is the prophetic voice of our whole soul and world, saying to us, "There, in such a world, that is the thing that *thou* canst do!" All voices from without, and counter-monitions of other men, how prudent and well-meant soever, are in the end but impertinences in comparison. A man has to go, often enough, right in the teeth of all that; all that, often enough, is as the Gates of Gaza, which a right Samson, duly surveying the strength of them, and well considering himself, has to walk off with, and carry away on his shoulders. Alas, we are sore hemmed-in, all of us, and dwell imprisoned as in Polyphemus caverns, in *cases* of triple brass,—which we have to break or perish in trying to break!

Let us add moreover, in reference to *Strafford,* that it is actually my *worst* word you now have; that having once expectorated my dissatisfaction with the general outcome, the worth and even excellence of many of the details become clearer to me. It was very evident to me that you had bestowed much pains on the work, much previous reading, much diligent manipulation in all kinds. What I wished was, at bottom, in summary this: That you had bestowed still more! It is perhaps the highest feat a man can attempt, the writing of a right Tragedy; I begin to know this better that I used to do. I have read three years on that piece of history, not to speak of long readings twenty years back; and still what to make of it, perhaps in far easier forms than that of Tragedy, I with a kind of despair have to confess that I do *not clearly know.* Most probably you will decide on printing this *Strafford;* against which, whatever private feelings I have, what more can I say? I will say as my last word,—a safe enough word: Be at least in no haste to publish it. Let it lie there for a while till it *cool,* till it get to a freer distance from you. Had you once made a plunge into some altogether foreign element, and swam about there for a time, you will see *Strafford* much more clearly from the other shore of that, and judge better of it what is to be done with it.

Of Dramatic *Art,* tho' I have eagerly listened to a Goethe speaking of it, and to several hundreds of other persons mumbling and trying to speak of it, I find that I, practically speaking, know yet almost as good as nothing. Indeed of *Art* generally (*Kunst,* so-called) I can know almost nothing: my first and last secret of *Kunst,* is to get a thorough *intelligence* of the *fact* to be painted, represented, or in whatever way set forth;—the *fact,*

deep as Hades, high as Heaven, and written *so*, as to the visual face of it, on our poor Earth! This once *blazing* within one, if it will ever get to blaze, and bursting to be out, one has to take the whole dexterity of adaptation one is master of or has ever gathered from the four winds, and with tremendous struggling, really frightful struggling, contrive to exhibit it one way or other! This is not *Art*, I know well; it is Robinson Crusoe, and not the Master of Woolwich, building a ship. Yet, at bottom, is there any Woolwich Builder for *such* kinds of craft? What *Kunst* had Homer; what *Kunst* had Shakespear? Patient docile valiant intelligence, conscious and unconscious, gathered from all winds, of these two things,—their own faculty of utterance, and the audience (rude theatre, Ithacan farm-hall, or whatever it was) they had to utter to: add *only* to which, as the soul of the whole, the above-said blazing radiant insight into the fact, blazing burning interest about it, and we have the whole Art of Shakespear and Homer!—To speak of Goethe, how the like of him is related to these two, would lead me a long way: but of Goethe too, and of all speaking men, I will say, The soul of all worth in them, without which none else is possible, and with which much is certain, are still that same radiant all-irradiating insight, that same burning interest, and the glorious melodious perennial *veracity* that results from those two.

Now, my Friend, what I fundamentally object to in *Strafford* is that even such an insight, such an interest, and consequently such a veracity is not there. You seem to me (if you will let the three-years reader speak to the one-year) not to have seized the true type of that Transaction, but a too untrue and superficial one. I object to the fate of Strafford being made to turn

on any kind of *quiddity;* it was a necessity of nature, and till you have shown it as such there is no right *Tragedy* made of it. There is a tragic *anecdote* made of it. I invite you to consider this. Then think what a misrepresentation you have had to make of the whole physiognomy of things in that opening of the Long Parliament;—all necessitated perhaps by Strafford's quiddity! The *fact* it seems to me is far more tragical, nay is alone tragical; and it was the *fact* that you, by emblems and fictions, etc., were to represent. Finally I ask you to revise and reconsider almost *all* the characters, except Strafford and Lucy! Am not I a modest man! My good Sterling, I will cease scribbling, cease fretting you. My purpose and wish is clear to your true heart; but the fulfilment of it—?—

God keep you and guide you, my dear Friend.

Affectionately yours,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 113

To Alexander Carlyle, Ecclefechan.

Chelsea, 7th February, 1842.

Dear Alick— . . . A new edition of the Book (on Heroes) is required; and I have a much better offer for it than ever Fraser* gave or would have given. Fraser gave me a poor £75 for the *first* edition, which is far the best usually, and a new man now offers me £100 for the second. Of course nobody shall get it for *less.* I am even thinking to try if I cannot get *all* my Books taken out of the drivelling hands in which they now lie, forcing their own sale, not in the least assisted by

* Mr. James Fraser had died on the 2d of October last.

their Salesman, who nevertheless swallows some three-fourths of the whole produce for *his* trouble! We shall see about it.—I find myself, one way and another, several hundred pounds poorer than I expected to be at this date; so that the new hundred is a welcome enough supply just now. Independent of it I was not in any strait or anxiety about money (thank Heaven for that!)—but *Mall* must be *kept in shaft* too, and that is a business of *perpetual* cost here.

Peel it is thought, will make an *effectual* operation on the Corn-Laws; whereby some improvement of trade seems possible before long. He is not going to work in *Emigration* just at present; and I suppose is right,—for the Radicals are all set against it, and say always, "Why banish *us* to seek food? Let us seek food freely where we are, and try that!" They will try it accordingly; and not prosper in it, as I guess; and *then* Emigration will be welcomer.—The distress of the people of Britain this winter, I believe, excels all that they have ever known before. One does not see so much of it immediately in this quarter, or indeed in this City at all; but I believe it is deep and desperate enough here too. Spitalfields Weavers live far on the opposite side of the City, seven miles from us and more; of them we hear only thro' the Newspapers, like you. But here at Chelsea, for the first time, I notice the Garden palings torn up this winter and stolen for fuel,—a bitter symptom, for the people in general are very honest.—Poor creatures! . . .

LETTER 114

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, Friday, 18th Feby., 1842.

. . . I too keep my feet, very handsomely, though in the *birth*-throes of a Book, as you know! It is a terrible business and will not get on with me hitherto at all; so the whole soul of me is filled as with a black confused lake, for which there is yet no outlet: a very unjoyful state of things. But I have known by past experience that such *lakes* do get an outlet; and indeed generally that the more painful the *birth* the better is the child born: so we must not complain at all, but hold on, and consider ourselves very fortunate and greatly honoured that *have* such pains laid upon us, were they far more painful. I am still going very *cannily* to work; and will not "*dad myself a' abreed.*"

For the present I have an additional task; that of getting my Books out of the hands of Fraser's executors, and put (if I can) into the care of another Bookseller, who I hope may make more of them for me. It is a most barren affair hitherto the Fraser one; and a much likelier Bookseller is willing to undertake for me,—provided I can get the goods fairly delivered out of the hands where they now are. It will be decided perhaps in a week now. The *worst* is that the poor Books lie where they are, and go on as they have been doing; and this I begin to think is the likeliest way of it *for the present.* But in any new Book I may write, I will take another way of it, a far other! And all the *old* Books too will deliver *themselves* quite quietly by

the mere aid of time, by and by. So we shall not mind it much; but only wish it would get settled one way or other, and leave us alone of it. Writing of Books, not getting paid for them, appears to be my task in this world; and is my *interest* too: for verily what will all the payment in creation concern me in a very little while hence, and then through all Eternity thereafter? Literally nothing at all! It will be no matter to a man whether they emptied the whole Bank of England upon him for wages, or declined giving him anything but mere *breeks* and *brose*, or not even these; literally *no* matter to him whatever! Let them take their own way then. My dear Mother, I am everlastingly *your* debtor for having from the beginning of my days taught me this lesson, and inculcated it by all methods upon me: it is upon the whole worth all the lessons in the world, and all the others without it are worth nothing.—. . .

LETTER 115

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, Wednesday Noon, 2 March, 1842.

My dear Mother—Yesterday a Letter came announcing that poor Mrs. Welsh, who had been very poorly for some time (but seemed to be recovering) was suddenly seized with something like a stroke of palsy on Friday morning last; at which Dr. Russell, as natural, expressed himself highly alarmed. My poor Wife, almost out of herself, insisted on setting off by the very earliest train, tho' ill of a cold and in no condition for travelling. She went last night at 8½ o'clock; one of the saddest-looking travellers I ever saw. She would arrive this morning,

about six, at Liverpool. Alas, alas, the poor thing (as I now learn by a new Letter which has just arrived) would find there that her kind ever-affectionate much-suffering Mother was already gone! She had never awakened from that palsy-stroke, but died that same evening * at half-past ten o'clock. O dear, O dear!——

I am of course all in a whirl of thoughts that cannot be uttered. My poor little Jeannie is at this moment breaking her heart at Liverpool, where there is nobody but some of her young female cousins to receive her. Her uncle and Walter (I find by the new Letter of this morning) were already to go away yesterday. I know not what course will have to be taken.

I will write to you again, probably in two days more. Adieu at present, dear Mother. Oh me!

Your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 116

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, Wednesday night, [2 March, 1842.]

My dear Mother—It is decided that I am to come up, and attend the Funeral. According to my guess, it will be on Saturday; but we lie in a confused posture for hearing: simply I have to make what utmost haste I can. On Friday night, by some conveyance or other, I expect to pass through Dumfries. . . .

My poor Wife lies at Liverpool very ill: I am to decide, or help her to decide, whether she shall go on.—. . .

* The 25th of February.

I will of course let you know about my movements: if you hear *nothing farther*, you may fancy me at Templand on Saturday, and that you will hear of me or see me soon: . . .

LETTER 117

To Dr. Carlyle, 3 Chester Terrace, Regent's Park, London.

Templand, Monday night, 28 March, 1842.

. . . My life for the last eight days has been of the most perfect solitude: very sad, but not a morose sadness; wholesome, I think, and not without a kind of blessedness. This House, all vacant except of memories, all silent except for winds, is like a kind of solemn Hades to me; the whole world is little other than a Hades. The weather is oftenest bad, but it is weather, not smoke-confusion and city-dirt: the sun bursts out at intervals, with the Durisdeer Hills all new powdered, grey-white with snow; I hear the rooks among the woods, the voice of rivers rushing near and far,—and all is full of impressiveness and meaning to me. . . .

LETTER 118

To J. G. Lockhart, London.

Templand, Thornhill, 5 April, 1842.

Dear Lockhart—Your Letter is very kind and friendly; thanks to you for it.

We are not much richer even in money by our good Mother's death, which has made us poorer in so many other ways: a small *peculium* once hers, is now ours, and might in case of ex-

tremity keep the hawks out of a poor author's eyes (which is a blessing too): but henceforth as heretofore our only sure revenue must be the great one which Tullius speaks of by the name *Parsimonia*,—meaning abstinence, rigorous abnegation, Scotch thrift, in a word! Not so bad a *vectigal* after all. Really the Scotch are a meritorious people. They make wholesome pottage by boiling oatmeal in water; savoury soup of a singed sheep's head. They teach a poor man to understand that he is verily to live on bread and water, or even to die for want of bread and water, rather than beg, and be another's bondsman. They say with their rigorous stoicism, and Calvinism which is Hyper Stoicism: *απέχου, ανέχου*, suffer, abstain; thou art here to abstain and endure! Honour to them, poor fellows. It is really the lesson which Destiny itself teaches every man, in the great inarticulate way, throughout this Life; and if the man be not a blockhead and unteachable, he learns it, let him be born in a peasant's hut or a king's palace.

We growl much about Bookseller-servitude; worse than Algerine,—and yet at bottom we are but a foolish folk. Consider you, for example, how many of your good things you would perhaps never have taken the trouble to write at all had there been no such servitude! *Servitude* was a blessing and a great *liberty*, the greatest that could be given a man! So the shrewd little De Staal, on reconsidering and computing it, found that the place of all places ever known to her she had enjoyed the most freedom in was the Bastille.—As to me I have dragged this ugly millstone Poverty at my heels, spurning it and cursing it often enough, ever since I was a man; yet there it tagged and lumbered on: and at length I was obliged to ask myself, Had they *cut* it for thee, sent thee soaring like a foolish

tumbler-pigeon, like a mad Byron! Thank the millstone, thou fool; it is thy ballast, and keeps the centre of gravity right! In short we are a foolish people, born fools—and it were wise perhaps, at present, to go and smoke a pipe in silence under the stars.

The Mountain tops are a-glow like so many volcanoes: it is poor tarry shepherds burning their heather, to let the grass have a chance. Sirius is glancing blue-bright like a spirit,—a comrade of more than twenty years. Penpont smoke-cloud and Drumlanrig Castle have alike gone out. In the North is an Aurora,—footlights of this great Theatre of a Universe, where you and I are players for an hour. God *is* great; and all else is verily altogether small.

These last days, the rustics and factors driven out of the way, have been altogether like a kind of Sabbath to me,—different enough from Agnew's. Unhappily they are now to end: in the beginning of next week come packers, carpenters; on the Thursday it all ends in an uproar of Auctioneers, etc.: I, before that, am far off, never to return hither. Back to your whirlpool, I suppose, in some few days more. Adieu, dear Lockhart; many good nights. Yours very truly,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 119

To His Wife, Chelsea.

Templand, 9 April, 1842.

. . . No wonder, my dear Wife, you are disheartened and sick about all work, and weary of the world generally. "Benevolence," I also agree with you, is no trade,—altogether or nearly altogether a futility when followed as a *trade*. Yet

work does still remain to be done; and the Highest Law does order us all to work. My prayer is and has always been that you would rouse up the fine faculties that *are* yours into some course of real true work, which you felt to be worthy of them and you! Your life would not then be happy; but it would cease to be miserable, it would become noble and clear, with a kind of sacredness shining through it. I know well, none better, how difficult it all is,—how peculiar and original your lot looks to you, and in many ways *is*. Nobody can find work *easily*, if much work do lie in him. All of us are in horrible difficulties, that look invincible,—but that are not so. The deepest difficulty, which also presses on us *all*, is the sick Sentimentalism we suck in with our whole nourishment, and get ingrained into the very blood of us, in these miserable ages! I actually do think it the deepest. It is this that makes me so impatient of George Sand, Mazzini and all that set of Prophets,—impatient so as often to be unjust to what of truth and genuine propriety of aim is in them. . . . It is not by *arguing* that I can ever hope to do you any service on that side. But I will never give up the hope to see you adequately *busy* with your whole mind; discovering, as *all* human beings may do, that even in the grimmest rocky wildernesses of existence there are blessed well-springs, there is an everlasting guiding-star. Courage, my poor little Jeannie. . . .

LETTER 120

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, Wednesday [June, 1842].

My dear Mother—Before going out to the Museum, I will write you a single word about the poor Widow Begg, the sister

of Burns, at Tranent. By dint of the requisite exertions here, chiefly on the part of Milnes (of Fryston in Yorkshire) whom I set a working, Peel has been prevailed upon to grant her a Pension of £20 a year, which also is to be continued in the shape of £10 a year to each of her two Daughters should they survive her. He makes farther a present donation of £50 from some other public fund at his disposal. Is not this good news? The poor Widow has already £10 a year from some Scotch charity: she will now have £30; and this £50 to start with, besides what the Subscription will still yield, will entirely set her up, poor body. Milnes is the man I staid with in Yorkshire last year; a very good little man indeed. . . . Let us be glad that a little good has been got done, and a deserving person relieved in her old age.

. . . Dear Mother, are you well, as I am? I must not add a word more or I shall get into a regular writing bout. Let Jenny send a Paper when you and she get to the Gill.

Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 121

To Alexander Carlyle, Ecclefechan.

Chelsea, 1 July, 1842.

My dear Brother—. . . Nothing new occurs with us here. Jane is still altogether weakly, but she grows better; Time alone can alleviate that kind of sorrow. She is left very lonely in this world now; her kindred mostly gone; very few of the people vaguely called "friends" worth much to her! It would be better for her, also, if she had more imperative employment

to follow: a small portion of the day suffices for all her *obligatory* work; and the rest, when she cannot *seek* work for herself, is apt to be spent in sorrowful reflexions. Her good cheerful cousin * is still here. We must hope for gladder days.

. . . As for me I keep within doors very much; in the warm blazing days I do not stir out at all till nightfall, and then make a long solitary excursion. I have never suffered much from the heat yet; tho' this summer is called one of the warmest,—and I hope will bring a good crop for one thing! However, for the last three weeks we have *veiled* weather, and sometimes (last night, for example) pretty free showers of rain.—The distress of the country appears to mount higher and higher; London, I believe, is freer from it than most Towns: what the issue or the remedy is to be no mortal knows. Alas, it is needless accusing Peel; we are *all* to blame; we have forgotten what was right and reasonable, seeking after Mammon, vanity, and our lusts; we have travelled long on that path, and it leads us *towards ruin*, as the like has ever led all men, and ever will lead!

My work makes no appearance at all on paper yet; but perhaps it will some day. I do not give it up, I wriggle and struggle along after it, endeavouring the best I can: it is not a pleasant stage of labour, to *see* nothing above ground: but the pleasant stage will perhaps come yet! Let us try. . . .

* Miss Jeannie Welsh.

LETTER 122

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 15 July, 1842.

My dear Mother—. . . I went one day to the Corn-law Conference: it became painfully clear to me that these poor people too had small chance to do much good. If their Corn-law Repeal were granted them, they would just go on as they had done; amassing money, fulfilling their desires, their appetites and whims; living *without* God in the world; therefore, without sympathy for man in the world; answering of their Brother as Cain did: "Am I my Brother's keeper?" I paid my Brother his *wages*, no more can he ask of me; what more have I to do with him?—These men think, and practically believe, there is no other *reality* but money at all. They are terribly mistaken; and will learn it by and by! . . .

LETTER 123

To the Revd. John Sterling.

Ely, Cambridgeshire, 6 Sep., 1842

Dear Sterling—In this sacerdotal City my thoughts revert to you; and from the Bagmen's room of the White Hart Inn, I employ Rowland Hill to carry a word from me. On the opposite side of my table, scribbles and counts assiduously a Norwich Bagman (happily in total silence otherwise); I have ridden all day, and walked all evening: you cannot expect much coherence in what I say.

Your Letter found me at Reginald Buller's Parsonage of Troston in Suffolk; whither I had followed my Wife; whence I departed this morning, on a pilgrimage to Cromwell-land,—successful thus far. My paths thro' the whole forenoon, indeed all the way to Soham, were utterly complex; my Syntax-steed is of the completest Rosinante species: nevertheless we plodded along thro' boundless flat cornfields of reclaimed bog; and in the yellow evening sunshine, a little after five, got landed at the foot of the Cathedral, which had hung venerable and majestic in the air all along for some five miles before. Ely has veritably once been an *Isle*, at least in winter time; a kind of chalk or limey sandstone hill, of no considerable height, rising amid the infinite of swamps, and very conspicuous now with its noble Pile on the crown of it,—one of the most impressive buildings I have ever in my life seen.

I ran over even before tea; and got admittance, happily in total solitude: some agencies, supposed to be human, were blowing the organ, making it discourse deep solemn music; a poor little sparrow was fluttering far aloft in the topmost windows of the lantern (top of the main tower, which is almost all of glass); this sparrow, and a poor country lad, who had plucked up courage to follow on seeing me enter,—were my only fellow worshippers. I declare it were a good arrangement if they would but keep the music going, in all such places, and sweep away the rest of the living lumber; and leave one alone in these enormous towering spaces, with one's own thoughts and the spirits of the Dead! - I believe this Ely Cathedral is one of the "finest," as they call it, in all England, and from me also few masses of architecture could win more admiration; but I recoil everywhere from treating these things as a *dilettantism*

at all; the impressions they give are too deep and sad to have anything to do with the shape of stones. To-night, as the heaving bellows blew, and the yellow sunshine streamed in thro' those high windows, and my footfalls and the poor country lad's were the only sounds from below, I looked aloft, and my eyes filled with very tears to look at all this, and remember beside it (wedded to it now, and *reconciled* with it for me) Oliver Cromwell's, "Cease your fooling, and come out, Sir!" In these two antagonisms lie what volumes of meaning!—

But to quit the sentimental and vague (in spite of Bagmen), know, dear Sterling, that I have clearly discovered the very House where my Friend Oliver dwelt and boiled his kettle some two hundred and two years ago; nay half an hour ago I actually sat and smoked a pipe upon *his* Horse-block, the very stone, which still lies at the entrance to the stables, split in two and shoved a little aside to make room for a piece of pavement, but left lying as too unmanageable still for removal, in a place so stagnant as Ely! I think there are few better pilgrimages left possible for a man at present. Oliver's House stands close by St. Mary's Church-yard; a mean shrunk-looking aged house, with "the biggest *tithe-barn* except one in all England": the Mr. Page who occupied it in Noble's time died only two years ago; a new arrangement has been made about Cathedral tithes, and the Oliver House now stands vacant, not like ever to be occupied again, and will soon probably vanish from the Earth. Could you persuade no Cambridge acquaintance who sketches to go up and take a portrait of it while there is yet time? Really it were well worth while. Soon, soon, or else never!

To-morrow early I go for St. Ives, for Huntingdon, and if possible Cambridge; next day I go homewards (Trostonwards)

by Newmarket; may probably get as far as Bury St. Edmund's where there is a man I know. About Monday next we return to Chelsea. How many guineas would I give to have Sterling beside me even now! Alas,—and I sit among Bagmen and sinners of the Earth: one never can get Sterling.—Well, good night any way, my much loved Friend; much loved, tho' ever quarrelled with, and indeed deserving dreadful hatred now and then! These accursed Bagmen have actually driven the wits out of my head, and I add no word more.—

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

Your Letter followed me to Troston,—thanks for it. A small Note of mine, accompanying a Letter from Emerson for you, had crossed it, I think, on the road.—My first *still* Bagman has rolled off, and a new noisier one has rolled in. I will out for another view of Oliver's Ghost, and then to bed. Adieu.

LETTER 124

To Thomas Ballantyne, Liverpool.

Troston, Suffolk, 9 Sepr., 1842.

My dear Sir. . . I have been in this country on a visit among friends* for about a week; I came to bring home my Wife who had already been here for some time. It was only yesternight that I returned from a three-days ride into Oliver Cromwell's country, Ely, Huntingdon, Cambridge, etc.; a region full of interest to me. The general condition of the Farm-labourers, though not offensive to the mere cursory eye, is I

* The Bullers.—See *Reminiscences*, i. 187.

fear full of misery. "Milk?" said an old man, to whom I was speaking at Mildenhall, the other day, "Lord bless you Sir, they never see milk! They take a little hot water with salt and pepper mixed, to soak their bit of bread in, and breakfast on that!" If the Heavens would be pleased to send us another Oliver—But alas the Heavens do not very often send us such! . . .

LETTER 125

To Dr. Carlyle, Beaumaris.

Chelsea, 27 Sepr., 1842.

. . . Lhotsky the Pole (did you never hear of him?) came to me the other morning with a most priceless Tractate on "Death by Starvation in the Metropolis": he is one of poor Mazzini's ragged regiment, whom ever since I heard last winter that he was utterly without bread or clothes, I have never been able to get rid of again,—having given him some old clothes, etc., on that sad occasion. This time he was on the point of being off for Paris; thence, if he failed, to America: to quit England at least forevermore. Unfortunately however he could not raise the whole passage-money! No such dignified, really noble-minded beggar, did we ever before see. I gave him a sovereign and a suit of old clothes: his silent bow when he left me was beyond any of Macready's: low, with outstretched arms, expressive at once of gratitude, felicity, despair!—Poor Lhotsky. I read his "Death by Starvation" in spite of its deep sincere tragedy of meaning, with explosions of laughter.— . . .

LETTER 126

To Edward FitzGerald, Naseby.

Chelsea, 10 Octr., 1842.

My dear Sir—It is a good sign of you that you are set "a-rolling"; I bid you Roll, roll! There ought to be a correct, complete and everyway *right* and authentic Essay, or little Book, written about Naseby as it now is and as it *then* seems to have been,—with the utmost possible distinctness, succinctness, energy, accuracy and available talent of every sort:—I leave you to consider, whether the actual Owner and Heaven's-steward of Naseby ought to have no hand in that!

As to the Pamphlets at Northampton, they are not very momentous, and will all be dreadfully dull reading; yet to a Northamptonshire man, I should think that first especially (No. 1158, "Fairfax's Orders at Northampton"), and the two "accounts of Naseby," might be worth something. . . . All these things are nearly sure to be in the British Museum; indeed as good as altogether sure.

Of Nichol's Leicestershire or the other County History I know nothing, except what you now tell me, or before told me. The Naseby Powder-*horn* I would look on both sides of before I bought it: the soldiers in 1645 did not carry *horns* (so far as I know or guess); their powder being in tiny *cans* (or bottles one may say), each holding a charge, and all suspended by a belt called the *bandelier;*—hanging like a strop of onions from the soldier's shoulder to his haunch, and rustling as he rode or walked! He lifted off each *can* or case, opened the lid of it,

and, having emptied it, hung it on again by the hook. He had to carry lighted match in his hand, poor fellow, and often got his powder wet, etc. "Pray to the Lord, and keep your powder *dry!*"

By the bye, as to those *women* said to be killed in your villages, I ought to have mentioned that there did usually follow Prince Rupert's Troopers a formidable body of Irish "queans" with long *skean-knives* who occasionally fought like furies, and of course might get themselves killed in fight,—nay it was only their petticoats that saved them from being hanged *after* fight; such was then the acknowledged law for "Irish Papists"; which nobody seemed to think very unfair; neither perhaps was it, such a squad had they become,—with no truth in their tongue any more, no pity or justice in their heart any more; a kind of hyæna-demons, *fit* only to be *hanged* when you could catch them! Whitlocke expressly enumerates "100 Irish queans" among the Naseby Prisoners; and another blockhead, Rycroft, says there were "300" of them killed.—Cannot you come down hither, in your way? I am at home every night after 5 o'clock.—Yours always,

T. C.

LETTER 127

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, Monday, 17th October, 1842.

My dear Jean—On Saturday night late the Picture* arrived by our Chelsea Carrier! The entire charge for carriage between you and us was but 7/4;—one of the cheapest freights I remember.

* Portrait (in oils) of Carlyle's Mother,—by Maxwell of Dumfries.

Discerning well what the big square Box contained, we made all the haste consistent with the safety of the contents to open it; in few minutes we got to the linen or cotton cloth, to James's pertinent judicious direction, and then in an instant more to the Picture itself! A general exclamation of approval was the instantaneous result. We have seldom any of us seen a more successful likeness: it far surpasses all we expected; we are truly glad to have got the business so satisfactorily managed, —and doubt not but you and James too are now of that opinion; to whose care and judgement such result, we know well enough, is mainly due. Nothing whatsoever, to the smallest fibre of the package, had gone wrong. I have carried the Picture, still sticking by its screws to the bottom of the Box, up stairs; and have it here standing against the light on two chairs: my good old Mother exactly as she looks; with her air of embarrassed *blateness*,* yet of energy, intelligence and true affection; my good old Mother!—Jane approves much the whole performance; the fashion of the cap, etc., as well as the drawing of it: I know the very hands, the pattern of the shawl, etc.: thanks to you, to the brave Painter and you!—One insignificant criticism is as yet all we have been able to make out against it: that the figure in the chair (owing to some small want of a stroke of colour somewhere about the bottom of the dress) seems hardly to *sit* in the chair, but rather somehow to be *standing;*—a most minute fault; which will not be noticeable at all when the Picture is once framed and hung up. Jane is to set about that final plain department of the business this very day. . . .

James must make my compliments to the Painter, my

* Shyness.

thanks; and say that we esteem him to possess a real genius for painting;—and do earnestly and solemnly charge him *not* to waste it away in that devil's quagmire of whisky* but to stand up to his task like a man, *shirking* no difficulty, fearing no evil or pain; and he may yet find far nobler results in it than heretofore!

. . . I must quit you without more words. Blessings with you and yours, dear Jean.—Your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 128

To the Revd. Alex. Scott.†

Chelsea, 24 Octr., 1842.

Dear Scott—Marheineke's Book will not do. It is of the deadliest tiresomeness; an altogether stupid Book; dependent for any interest it has solely on the copious incessant extracts from Luther's writings; which clipping process is itself very ill managed; so that I suppose this dull compilation is as good as superseded, even in Germany, by the lively dextrous French one of little Michelet. Ranke too is said to be coming out with some History of Luther, perhaps has begun to come out with it.

There was published some ten years ago an entertaining and intelligent *Life of Schiller*, containing various new letters of his, new personal details, etc., by a Frau von Wollzogen (I

* He did, however, poor fellow, soon afterwards waste himself in that way.

† "A friend of ours, once E. Irving's Assistant," says Carlyle in an omitted letter to his mother.

think that was her title), who had known the man, and was connected with his Wife's family. Goethe sent it over to me; I can remember reading it, in the Annan and Liverpool Steamer, not without some real interest. Would the British Public do the like? I think it is in either two or else three thinnish "foolscap-octavos."

There is also here a Preuss's *Life of Frederick the Great*, in two thin Octavos; untranslated as yet: I have not read it myself, and only had it recommended to me as the eligiblest initiatory Book on that subject.

The thing that strikes me, however, as hopefullest, if any thing be very hopeful, is a certain *Life of Herder by his Widow*. It is not a large Book, perhaps one good Octavo might hold it in English; it is simple, clear; and, I can remember, entertained me very much, when I read it fifteen years ago in Edinburgh. The translating of it would involve your young friend, if he were willing to do his best, in a general perusal of Herder's writings, which also might perhaps be a useful task for him.

Booksellers used to say in my time that "no Translation from the German had ever been known to prosper!" I hope that is altered now; but do not with any certainty know if it be so. Except indeed that Mrs. Austin and others seem to make a kind of Literary existence out in that way.

If I can assist you further by word or deed, pray ask me.

Yours always truly,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 129

To Dr. Carlyle.

Chelsea, 2 Novr., 1842.

. . . I have been at Kenilworth; I remember Warwick Castle well, and the Picture of Cromwell you mention,—standing in the embrasure of a window, with poor Charles First opposite him; like a black Thundercloud and a pretty card-castle: it struck me much.—I wish you had gone to see Kineton and Edgehill Field, which is not very far out of one's line there. Are you within reach of Worcester City? the scene of the crowning mercy! With a *Rushworth* in one's hand, one might gather a great deal of knowledge in your present way of life. . . .

You have doubtless noticed the death of poor Allan Cunningham in the Newspapers. I never heard of it till yesterday afternoon; and then, as you may fancy, with a painful shock. I went up directly to leave a card for the poor Widow. It was then after dark: in an upper window behind white curtains glowed a light, very visible from the street: there, I said to myself, lies the mortal hull of my poor brave Allan! The Widow, I was told by the servant, bore up resolutely, and was as well as one could expect: Dr. Cunningham * continuing with her. Alas, it is but about a week since I stopped Allan near his own house, and spoke to him, little thinking it was the *last* time! He died *instantly*, they say: he had just finished the *Life of Wilkie;* his brother the Doctor was speaking with him,—

* Allan's brother.

suddenly Allan ceased.—I shall miss him here; many will miss him. He was a rugged true mass of Scotch manhood; had far more talent in him, far more worth in him than he ever got developed, much as he had developed of both. . . .

LETTER 130

To Thomas Ballantyne.

Chelsea, 18th Novr., 1842.

My dear Sir—. . . Emerson's *Essay* is capital; one of the best, or almost the very best, I have ever seen of his. I praise you greatly for getting it reprinted: everybody thinks it a favourable symptom of Lancashire Radicals that they have a sense for such ideas as these. A Letter came from Emerson along with yours; he is well, and contemplating some new Lectures, I think, for New York. I want to send him a copy of *Man the Reformer* in the Bolton type; but have none left here, and know not at once where to find them in London. Can you clap a stamp on one, and despatch it hither? Or indeed why not off to Concord direct! His address is: "R. Waldo Emerson, Esq., Concord, Massachusetts": you wrap the Essay up like a Newspaper, open at the ends; I think our Postmasters take it in that state for 8d. by *ship*, for 12d. by *steamer;* and it travels, so wrapt, for a cent or two in America. Emerson now knows your name.

I find it was Alcott who first set the Essay afloat here; by way of basis for some crotchets or headlong *Ultraism* of his own, derived, and also *perverted*, from Emerson's way of thought. I was amused with Alcott's criticism of me! He is a good man,

but a bore of the first magnitude; a "*Potato Quixote*," as some named him here. He came along in Autumn to reform all England, by reducing us first of all to live exclusively on vegetables: all England, of course, was deaf as Ailsa Craig; and Alcott is home in a Highland rage at their stupidity. Long may he abide, and happy may he be! . . .

LETTER 131

To Alexander Carlyle, Ecclefechan.

Chelsea, 28 December, 1842.

My dear Brother—Here is a paper which I hope you will get exchanged for a couple of sovereigns before Saturday, and give them to our two Namesakes, Jane and Tom—from their Aunt and Uncle "at London." You may safely add as many heartiest good wishes for the Newyear Season, and for all seasons, as your own heart can dictate! Good be ever with these Two, and with all that belong to you, is and must remain while life remains, your Brother's prayer.—We will say also, and wish, as poor Edward Irving used to do, "May the worst of our years be past." We have had some rather rough years, but we must not complain.

I here am in a terrible hurry: *writing* daily: I hope before long to have *something** ready for printing,—tho' not the *thing* I was chiefly meaning. I live in almost perfect solitude; avoiding all people, or almost all: it is the only way to get forward with work.

. . . We had a Poet here (last night), a very clever man

* *Past and Present.*

called Alfred Tennyson; and Jack, and a friend named Darwin, both admirers of Alfred's, "came to see." We had a pleasant little evening. Alfred is a right hearty talker; and one of the powerfullest *smokers* I have ever worked along with in that department! Our Welsh Attorney* had sent a leg of Welsh mutton, unsurpassable in quality, and a magnificent but to us uneatable goose: there was a dinner for the party,—a party *needed* for the dinner.—Jack is in perfect order; as lively and brisk as I have seen him for a long time.

. . . I have heard nothing special about Ecclefechan or its business; but I fear in general that things *cannot* be going well there. Perhaps some temporary improvement is not at a great distance now. People here calculate on it as *possible* that Peel may abrogate the Corn-law this very year. The *next* year is the latest date almost anybody assigns it. Very evidently it is *fast* going now; rushing down like an undermined house! Yesterday the Member ——, a very pitiful little person, whose name you may see in Corn-law debates,—had called here, and left his address, while I was out. My notion is he means to engage *me* too in the service of "the League"; to "lecture" for him, or the like. I am already engaged for a far bigger *League* (that of the oppressed Poor against the idle Rich; that of God against the Devil) and will answer No to ——.

Dear Brother, I have not another inch of room, or minute of time. May God's blessing be ever with you: that is my heart's prayer.

Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

* Charles Redwood, "the honest Lawyer," who was Carlyle's host at Llandough, Wales, on two or three occasions.

LETTER 132

To the Revd. John Sterling, Falmouth.

Chelsea, 23 Feb., 1843.

Dear Sterling—Blessings on your pen once more! You have given us a terrible fright, and must not make any fresh "experiments" of that nature! We are right glad to see your hand again; to understand that you are steadily tho' slowly getting built together again. Possess your soul in patience there: it is actually a better "progress" a thousand times than you are aware of! I cannot get you to understand this of *Silence;* but the Fates, I hope will,—for it is of the highest moment to you. *Festina lente,* O Heavens, there is a thousand times more in Silence than that: "Self-annihilation, the beginning of all good and wisdom," this is in it among other things. The gods have somewhat in store for you,—if you will not spill it! Be quiet, I say, and thankful to the gods.

No man was lately busier, and few sicklier, than I now am. Work is not possible for me except in a red-hot element which roasts the life out of me. I have still three weeks of the ugliest labour; and shall be fit for the hospital then.

This thing I am upon is a volume to be called "Past and Present": it is moral, political, historical, etc.;—a most questionable, redhot, indignant thing: for my heart is sick to look at the things now going on in this England; and two millions of men sitting in Poor-Law Bastilles seem to ask of every English soul, "Hast thou no word to say for us?" On the whole, I am heartily sorry for myself,—sorry that I could not help writing such words, and had none better to write.

Whether any *Cromwell*, or what, lies in the rear of all this? The Fates know.

It was John Sterling, I think, that first told me my nature was Political; it is strange enough how, beyond expectation, that oracle is verifying itself.

If you lay within distance of me, what better could I do than run into the Spring sunshine and your neighbourhood, were this horrid load of hodwork off my shoulders! But you are two hundred miles away; and my vehement speeches would do you no good at present.

I have seen nobody, except in glimpses, these several months. To-day I am going over the River, to crawl about in the Lethe Flats of Battersea, if nothing better. Your Brother called yesterday; complaining of slight cold; otherwise brisk, hardy, victorious as ever.

Adieu, dear Sterling. Be quiet, I say; thankful to Heaven, —and mindful as often as you can of *Me!*

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 133

To Thomas Ballantyne, Liverpool.

Chelsea, 28 Feby., 1843.

My dear Sir—Many thanks for your Notes; which were sufficient for my purpose. I had already written down "some 13" as the cipher of the Manchester business; and so it may now stand.*

The Book is to be called *Past and Present:* one stiff volume, treating of the grand "Condition of England Question,"—I

* In a former letter to Mr. Ballantyne (15 Feb., 1843) Carlyle had asked, "Can you without much difficulty ascertain for me *how many persons were killed* at the old Manchester Peterloo?"

suppose, in a somewhat unexpected way. But you will see in not many weeks. The Printer is already at work,—though the poor *Writer* has still a rather heavy fortnight in store before ending; and was seldom busier.

The Booksellers Chapman and Hall have forwarded, from me, a copy of *Chartism;* addressed "Mr. Samuel Bamford,* Silk-weaver, Middleton near Manchester." The Book, they tell me, now lies or will straightway lie, at the shop of Syms and Dinham (if I remember the name right) in Manchester, "to be called for." Will you be so kind as call for it, or apprise Bamford that he must call.

I could rejoice to hear that Bamford had decided on sticking to *authentic* Prose; writing down many a thing that he with his own heart and eyes has *known:* that seems to me his true vocation as an Author; for Poetry I could trace no decided call in him. You need not mortify the brave man by telling him this straight out;—but if he could get in some oblique way convinced of it, I feel certain there were good and not harm done to him. He is certainly a remarkable man; calculated, one would say, to be the spokesman of much that lies dumb at present,—with no way of speaking itself but Chartist Insurrections, Trades Unions and such like; which are a very imperfect way indeed! It will be well worth your while to go and see him, to keep your eye upon him, if at any time there be possibility of helping him on his way.

I am spending my allotted minutes *here,*—and must end!

Yours always truly,

T. CARLYLE.

* "There has a curious Book, Bamford's *Passages in the Life of a Radical,* come to me," Carlyle wrote to his brother John (21 Jan.). "It is to be had 'at Middleton near Manchester from the Author'"

LETTER 134

To An Unknown Correspondent.

Chelsea, 13th March, 1843.

Dear Sir—Some time ago your Letter was delivered to me; I take literally the first free half-hour I have had since, to write you a word of answer. It would give me true satisfaction, could any advice of mine contribute to forward you in your honourable course of self-improvement; but a long experience has taught me that advice can profit but little; that there is a good reason why "advice is so seldom followed"—this reason, namely, that it is so seldom, and can almost never be, rightly given. No man knows the state of another; it is always to some more or less imaginary man that the wisest and most honest adviser is speaking. As to the books which you, whom I know so little of, should read, there is hardly anything definite that can be said. For one thing, you may be strenuously advised to keep reading. Any good book, any book that is wiser than yourself, will teach you something—a great many things, indirectly and directly, if your mind be open to learn. This old counsel of Johnson's is also good and universally applicable —read the book you do honestly feel a wish and curiosity to read. The very wish and curiosity indicate that you then and there are the person likely to get good of it. "Our wishes are presentiments of our capabilities": that is a noble saying, of deep encouragement to all true men; applicable to our wishes and efforts in regard to reading, as to other things. Among all the objects that look wonderful and beautiful to

you, follow with fresh hope the one that looks wonderfullest, beautifullest. You will gradually by various trials (which trials see that you make honest, manful ones, not silly, short, fitful ones) discover what is for you the wonderfullest, beautifullest; what is your true element and promise, and be able to abide by that. True Desire, the Monition of Nature, is much to be attended to. But here also you are to discriminate carefully between true desire and false. The medical men tell us we should eat what we truly have an appetite for; but what we only falsely have an appetite for we should resolutely avoid. It is very true. And flimsy, "desultory" readers, who fly from foolish book to foolish book, and get good of none, but mischief of all—are not these as foolish, unhealthy eaters, who mistake their superficial, false desire after spiceries and confectioneries for the real appetite, of which even they are not destitute, though it lies far deeper, far quieter, after solid nutritive food? With these illustrations I will recommend Johnson's advice to you.

Another thing, and only one other, I will say. All books are properly the record of the History of Past Men. What thoughts Past Men had in them; what actions Past Men did,—the summary of all books whatsoever lies there. It is on this ground that the class of books specially named History can be safely recommended as the basis of all study of books; the preliminary to all right and full understanding of anything we can expect to find in books. Past History, and especially the Past History of one's own Native Country,—everybody may be advised to begin with that. Let him study that faithfully, innumerable inquiries, with due indications, will branch out from it; he has a broad, beaten highway from which all the country

is more or less visible,—there travelling, let him choose where he will dwell. Neither let mistakes nor wrong directions, of which every man, in his studies and elsewhere, falls into many, discourage you. There is precious instruction to be got by finding that we were wrong. Let a man try faithfully, manfully to be right; he will grow daily more and more right. It is at bottom the condition on which all men have to cultivate themselves. Our very walking is an incessant falling; and a catching of ourselves before we come actually to the pavement! It is emblematic of all things a man does. In conclusion, I will remind you that it is not by books alone, or by books chiefly, that a man becomes in all points a man. Study to do faithfully whatsoever thing in your actual situation, there and now, you find expressly or tacitly laid to your charge,—that is your post; stand in it like a true soldier; silently devour the many chagrins of it, as all human situations have many; and be your aim not to quit it without doing all that it, at least, required of you. A man perfects himself by work much more than by reading. They are a growing kind of men that can wisely combine the two things; wisely, valiantly, can do what is laid to their hand in their present sphere, and prepare themselves withal for doing other wider things, if such lie before them. With many good wishes and encouragements, I remain, yours sincerely,

THOMAS CARLYLE.

LETTER 135

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 24 March, 1843.

My dear Mother—Having a few minutes to myself to-day, I will again scribble you a line. The Doctor sent me down Alick's Letter; the best news in which was that you were in your usual tolerable state of health; that you had walked out with him "to the top of Potter Knowe." I am very glad to hear so much authentically particularized.—Since yesterday, in order to be farther from the fire in these warmer days, and have my *side* to the light, which I like better, I have shifted my writing-table; and now every time I look up, *your* affectionate sorrowing face looks down on me from the Picture-Frame above the mantel-piece*: my dear good Mother! It has a sorrow in it, that face, which goes into my very heart. But it is not to be called a mere "sorrow" either; it is a noble *weariness* rather, as of much work *done*. I will wish all men and all women such a "sorrow."

Our Printing here goes on with tolerable success; and is now about half finished. He is a good clever man my Printer, whom I discovered several years ago, and whom I have insisted on sticking to ever since. They say, "He is a little dearer."—"Well," I answer, "ought he not; being considerably *better?*" A better man ought to be had in respect, and by all methods encouraged, wherever we fall in with him.—My copyists (for

* The painting by Maxwell, hung at this time over the drawing-room or study mantel-piece. In later years Carlyle had it hung over the fireplace in his bedroom.

the American Market) give me somewhat more trouble: but they also, as I trust, will be all over in about a week. The Packet of Paper will then go off from Liverpool, and I shall have no more to do with it: if they can thereby save themselves from the American thief [pirate], it shall be well: if not, why then he must steal; I could not hinder him!—One of my chief Copyists is a poor young woman who has been bedrid for almost a year, totally unable to stir from the spot, with a disease in the backbone. There are two Sisters of them; Daughters of a Widow: the Widow married again, and they could not live with the new Father; accordingly they removed into a lodging of their own to support themselves by being Governesses in Schools: they were doing extremely well, till this one was lamed in the way I speak of,—and now, poor thing, she is striving to write, or to sew, or to do anything she possibly can for herself, lying fixed on her back! The writing she makes is not good; but it is very painstaking: how can I complain of it? By and by I mean to go and see the poor girls myself, and ascertain whether any other aid be possible for them. . . .

LETTER 136

To Alexander Carlyle, Ecclefechan.

Chelsea, Friday-evening, 26 May, 1843.

My dear Brother—Yesterday I had a Letter from the Doctor, who had seen you as he passed thro' Ecclefechan; you need not doubt but the news he gave me was interesting! You have now finished the sale of your effects in Ecclefechan, this very day you must have been removing from your house, into some other temporary abode; and in a short time, it appears, you are to

make a much farther removal, and try the new country over the sea. My dear Brother, it is a great and painful enterprise; but, I trust in Heaven, it may be a blessed one. My thoughts have been with you constantly in these days; ever and anon the image of poor Ecclefechan, and my good Brother closing his sorrowful battle there, has risen on me strangely thro' whatever I might be looking at here. Courage, my Brother! You will get thro' all those pains and confusions; you will cut your way, like a brave man, into new battleground, and rise into victory yet, if it please God! Few sights I have looked on have been painfuller to me than that of a man with your energies and qualities struggling in such a scene, under such galling impediments, as you have long been. I have a clear hope that better times, and a more generous fight, are appointed for you in that new home. You will have no miserable Laird or other Fellow-mortal whatever, to ask leave of there; you will, at least, appeal direct to the Great Powers, and ask *them* whether you deserve to prosper or not. It seems to me a most blessed change; worthy of being purchased at a very great cost of pain.

The report John gives us of your present mood of mind is very satisfactory. He rather complains that you have not yielded to his scheme of going out to Canada first, and looking at it: this surely was kindly intended on his part, but on the whole both Jane and I are of opinion that your own resolution for your own behoof, is the wise one. It will be a confused forbidding aspect that the new country offers you; but under that first look, which you will not let dishearten you, there will be a *second* look, there will lie all manner of possibilities, which to the brave man will become more and more productive. On the whole, is it not better that you buckle to it, as you mean to do,

resolutely, with your whole heart, *at once?* "There is a puddle at every town-end," says the Proverb: it is better to get *thro'* that, perhaps, without looking at it farther. I anticipate great things for you in that new way of life,—first of all far better health than you have had lately; healthy honest *field*-work, far better for the body; and then still more, the awakening of a generous manful hope in your heart and mind, such as has long been absent in these late sorrowful times.

Your parting with us all will be painful; yes, dear Brother, it will be a cruel sorrow; but on the whole this too must be borne. Nay you are not to think it a *final* leave you are taking of any of us: Canada, by steam and other means, is coming daily closer to Britain; for my share, I see not but it is likelier the whole of them may have to go out to *you* if times do not mend. There is positively no existence for an industrious tiller of the soil in this country in our day; and the view I have of the days that are coming often makes me shudder! To struggle out one's own life in such a country is dreary; but to leave a quantity of children in such a scene, which grows yearly more unmanageable, is frightful. No; rather consider yourself as the harbinger and pioneer of the others, than as one cut off from them: the blessing of God *does* rest upon the brave man, who with a sincere wise heart goes forth in the name of God.

I remember well at this moment, the last look I got of Jamie and you, as I went off, in the steamer towards this place some eight years ago. I felt that I was gone from you; but that I had been bound and compelled to go;—that, in the name of Heaven, I must now do and struggle! In the midst of pain, a better feeling arises: it is good for a man that he be cast, from time to time, forth from his old refuges, and made to try what

his relation with the great seen and unseen Realities is!—I hope yet to see you in Canada some day; and sit by your hearth on ground that belongs to yourself and the Maker alone!—

Jack talks of £300 as a sum that you would have a fair chance with, were it lying ready for you on your landing on the other side. I can say only that I will right heartily go halves with him in any such sum that may be considered fittest; and it will be a true tho' small relief to my mind to do so. I know [not] whether I should have spoken to you about this at all; for perhaps he has not yet mentioned it to you, and the consultation may be still incomplete: but I could not help signifying my readiness even before the time.

Our poor dear Mother will suffer sore; but you, of course, will do all that is in you to spare her true heart any sorrow that is not inevitable. The good old heart of a Mother! She is the saddest and the tenderest sight we have in this world; one could weep floods of tears, were there not something in it of a sacredness that led one beyond tears. It was the most high God that made Mothers and the sacred affection of children's hearts: yes, it was He;—and shall it not, in the end, be *all well;* on this side of death, or beyond death. We will pray once more from our inmost heart if we can, "Our Father which art in Heaven, *thy* will be done!"

My dear Brother, I am scribbling here to give some utterance to myself on this occasion; and yet I feel that I have no utterance; that all I can say is but some dumb half-utterance;—that in fact I ought to end and hold my peace, and leave you to conceive what it is that I am meaning. You know well enough what I mean! I pray with my whole soul all blessings to be upon you. I bid you be of courage, and quit yourself like a

man; I prophesy all good, spiritual and temporal, to you if you do. And so let me not speak another word.

Last week you would receive a Post-Office order (or was it the beginning of this week) for two pounds. I think it was not specifically mentioned that one of the pounds was a gift to the poor little [Laddie] who has just arrived, and is lying asleep on its Mother's Knee, little conscious of all this bustle! I hope there will be something for *snaps* to Jane and Tom besides.— I expect to hear very soon from the Doctor again. I send my blessing to you all; and am ever

Your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 137

To Mr. Greig, Canandaigua, State of New York.*

Chelsea, 17th June, 1843.

. . . I write at present to request a very special favour. A Brother of mine, Alexander by name, whom I love much, and am very sad indeed to part with, is about emigrating to America. He is a Farmer, of the race of Farmers; a man in no wise destitute of due qualities for farming; who nevertheless, like so many others, finds it a too unprofitable enterprise in this heavy-laden Country; and so after many years of hesitation, decides at length that he must go and try the business under new conditions, on your side of the sea. He has a Wife and Family of young children; he is still in the vigour of life (two years younger than myself); a man of short stature, but of robust force of muscle, impetuous energy of character, exceedingly

* See *ante*, p. 64, n.

expert, shifty and adroit in all kinds of rural and miscellaneous labour; he will have, I understand, some £500* clear money when he reaches your coasts: with these capabilities and the impartial sky over him, and the impartial Earth under him, he must do the best he can! I believe I may venture to add that he is a man of real integrity and veracity: of deep, affectionate true-hearted, honourable spirit;—intrinsically a bit of good Annandale stuff, with perhaps far more of faculty in him than has ever been developed, or in this world is ever likely to be developed now. But your neighbour Mr. Clow knows him well, and can give a more impartial account, tho' he also is related to him, being Cousin of his Wife.

My Brother's first aim was towards Upper Canada, but I have advised him to take Canandaigua by the way, and pause till he have examined there. Mr. Colman† whom I have consulted on the subject, votes emphatically to the same effect. My Brother determines to do so. He hopes to sail by the *Ashburton* line Ship in a few days, and may reach New York probably within a month after this Letter. In three days more I suppose, he may be in Canandaigua. He is writing by this Steamer to Mr. Clow; will hope to find a Letter from him lying

* This sum was given to their brother Alick by Carlyle and Dr. Carlyle in equal shares.

† Mr. Henry Colman, late Agricultural Commissioner of Massachusetts, who had become a resident in the State of New York, near Canandaigua. He was now visiting Europe, "for the purpose of Agricultural observation and inquiry." The reports of his observations were published under the title of *European Agriculture and Rural Economy*, in two vols. 8vo., 1846-48,—a work that still retains value from the accuracy and thoroughness of its statements. He had called at Chelsea, and Carlyle sends a report of what he had gleaned from him, in an extremely long letter to his brother Alick, of the same date as the above letter.

in the Post-office at New York. I will give him a Note of your Address, with my signature to it in his pocket. If there be any furtherance, guidance, or honest help you can yield this Brother of mine in the present trying state of his affairs—I only say it will be about as true a service done to me as one man can do another. There are few wishes more ardent in me than for a blessing on this Pilgrim and his wayfaring.—Mr. Colman fancies he might find some temporary occupation, lease of a farm, charge of a farm, or other convenient means of duly investigating Canandaigua for a year or so till he saw where to settle. This also seems to be my Brother's own notion. But I have already said enough. If there be any opportunity of helping, you on the spot will know best what opportunity,—and on various grounds I persuade myself, you will not *be slow to use it.*— . . . T. C.

Postscript by Mrs. Carlyle, written on a copy of the above Letter, which she had made for her Brother-in-law:

My dear Alick,—I pray Heaven that the above Letter will make your difficult way somewhat smoother for you. I am sure that Mr. Greig is a most kind-hearted man, and for old affection's sake will feel strongly disposed to serve you. Nevertheless, in this world one's best help must lie always in oneself, as you and I and everyone of our standing, with any grain of sense in his head cannot have missed to perceive.—God go with you, and bless you wherever you go. I might say many things,—sad and encouraging both, but all that I might say is best summed up in these three words, *God bless you!* I will always think of you with affection, and hope that you will do the same by me.—JANE CARLYLE.

LETTER 138

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, Friday Evening, 23 June, 1843.

My dear Mother—John's second Letter of to-day is just come. The first arrived at 11 o'clock; tho' I had been expecting the tidings,* and had nothing else to expect, it fell upon my heart like a heavy stone!—He says you bore your great sorrow with the firmness we have known in you, "like a Christian and a brave woman." It is what I had to expect also,—thank Heaven for it. You have had much to suffer, dear Mother, and are grown old in this Valley of Tears; but you say always, as all of us should say, "Have we not many mercies too?" Is there not above all, and in all, a *Father* watching over us; through whom all sorrows *shall* yet work together for good? —Yes, it is even so. Let us try to hold by that as an anchor both sure and steadfast.

What John says of Alick was highly affecting and consolatory to me. "He had recovered all his old energy and manful activity":—yes, poor fellow, by God's blessing he will yet recover all, and be himself again in that new Home. . . . He will step into a new scene of activity, with added years and wisdom, and see that it says everywhere to him, "As thou art wise in me, so shalt thou prosper!" Even I who am not much given to hope, have a real expectation that this will be the saving of our poor Alick. May God grant it. A brave man and a true;

* Of his brother Alick's departure for Liverpool; whence he sailed with wife and family, on Sunday, 25 June, for New York; and never saw his native land again.

but borne down, and torn away by this thing and by that, as I have hardly seen any man.

. . . At present and till to-morrow night late, I am the busiest mortal I ever before in my days was. I write all day and all night (till near midnight),—running against time, at a very useless "Article"* which I had undertaken; which must be finished, being undertaken. I could have liked it better at another time! On Saturday night, however, it has to go to press,—the whole Review Number has to be *out* on the first of July. I shall soon now have room to consider myself,—with a sharp fight still in the interim, however!

It is now near tea; I have my scrawls of manuscript to look over; and make ready for the "three pages more" before bed-time. My sleep is good enough again. We are all well. A terrible quantity of Americans, etc., here! I have three or four Notes daily to answer besides my other writing.

Adieu my dear Mother: do I not hope to see you soon?

Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 139

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Llandough, Cowbridge, South Wales, 10 July, 1843.

My dear Jean—You had a small Note from me at Bristol, announcing my journey hitherward, and promising you a fuller detail so soon as I should arrive here. On Thursday morning, as appointed, I left Bristol in a Cardiff Steamer; . . . We got into Cardiff Harbour, as I was finishing my last cigar, all

* *Dr. Francia*, for the *Foreign Quarterly Review*.

safe, about three in the afternoon. My Welshman* was in waiting, the hospitable man. An ancient, lean, very queer-looking Welsh servant jumped on board for my luggage, a venerable *tub-gig* and able horse were standing near; we all jumped in, and rolled off thro' Cardiff, a flat stupid-looking town, half the size of Dumfries,—forward twelve miles westward to Cowbridge, a place not unlike Lockerby, only clearer and airier-looking among the green knolls; and then, turning off abruptly to the south for about a mile through green woody knolls with spaces of fat meadow intervening, we finally arrived here at this clean-trimmed, lonely establishment,—standing on the slope of just such a meadow as the others are, with two woody knolls rising near in front, and the one in the rear looking into our very chimney pots,—the feeblest *clachan*† in the world (Llandough by name) just showing its gable-ends over another part of the same height, two fields farther to the left. . . . They let me pretty well alone and are heartily kind to me. The good man has horses; on which we have ridden twice to the sea, five or six miles off,—through truly awful roads, for they are steep as *scaurs*,‡ about a yard and a half broad, all made of rough limestone *cobbles* as slippery as polished iron, and rough of level, as if no spade or pick had ever been used upon them: down and up these the little fiery quadrupeds take the greatest delight to *gallop*, as if that were the only conceivable pace for a horse of spirit! . . . Across the Channel you see Devonshire piled up, heavy and blunt-looking, but of considerable height: it is "the English hills"; nobody knows or cares about it further.—Old ruined castles all over-grown with ivy are abundant; and straggling most disorderly little

* Mr. Redwood. † Hamlet. ‡ Precipices.

villages, white-washed, but sluttish, all hanging by the bank of some small rivulet, or by the skirts of some old Church on the knoll-top,—the houses all sprinkled about as if you had shaken them out of a pepper-box. . . .

Well, dear Jean, you did not expect to read a description of Wales, did you? Our house-hold is itself sufficiently strange. My "honest Lawyer," for I think he deserves that name, is a man about as tall as myself and perhaps twice as *lean*, somewhat younger though he looks older; a person truly worth giving a glance at. . . . Good Redwood, he is dreadfully unentertaining for a *crack;* but he goes away, the instant you hint such a thing, and leaves you alone: what could man do more! I believe I shall grow to like him yet. His Mother is a most douce, quiet person, in black Quaker bonnet and drab-brown shawl; reads all day "good books," or looks a little after the dinner. Our house for most part, as at present, is silent as if inhabited by ghosts. I lounge about all day, with books, under trees, lying on the grass: I have not at all grown tired of it yet. As the weather is delightful, perhaps I may still make out almost a week. I have then two days (if I can manage it) to spend with the Bishop of St. David's (a brave man tho' a Bishop!) at Carmarthen some sixty miles off: after that I think of making towards the Coast and getting into a Steamer for Liverpool. Brother Jack will perhaps come and meet me, then or sooner: we are in communication already.— . . .

LETTER 140

To Edward FitzGerald, Ireland.

Scotsbrig, Ecclefechan, N. B., 16 August, 1843.

Dear FitzGerald—Your letter found me amid the mists, rain-tempests, slate-chasms and other intricacies of a Welsh tour, on which enterprise I had embarked some weeks before. I have now got home to my Mother's Cottage; heartily tired; meaning to rest here for a week or two, and see what will come of that. All sight of waterfalls and such like, almost all speech of men, shall be far from me for a while! I do literally nothing. I saunter along the slopes of the high grounds, wide grassy expanses, bare of wood, tenanted only by sheep which need no shepherd, where all is silent, in this noble Autumn weather, "as if Pan *slept.*" At evening I can see the windows of Carlisle, twenty miles off, gleaming against the setting sun; and westward and southward an endless sea of mountains, not one of them speaking an impertinent word to me;—and so I rove about, and, like Alexander Selkirk, for the time being, am monarch of all I survey.

My purpose to visit Naseby holds firm as ever. Nothing is fixed with me as to movements farther, except that I do not return to Babylon till this month of August and its heats be over. If your project continue firm, perhaps the end of your "six weeks" might also suit the time of my return southward: in that case it would be right pleasant for me to pause at Crick, and spend a couple of days with you at Naseby; terminating my travels in a worthy manner. But it is not worth while to

alter anything on my account: if you have not returned as I pass, we will wait for some other opportunity. Write some time soon, how it is. I shall be here yet for a week or ten days; here or appointed to return hither.

Were my travelling faculty a shade better, I should be tempted to run up to Dunbar; and see if on the spot it were possible, what by all books and study it has never hitherto been, to form some rational conjecture about the manner of the Fight there. I went about a hundred miles out of my way to see Gloucester and Worcester,—and made mighty little of them when I did see them! The "crowning mercy" I could only look at from Severn Bridge, with a poor labourer out of work for guide, who "wished to God we had another Oliver, Sir, times is so cruel bad!" I wished it too, but knew not where to find him. One wanders in vain over battlefields and antiquarian wrecks seeking the man; he is not here, he is gone to his place—and has left Peel, Russell and Company behind him.

Spedding's Brother wishes me over to Skiddaw and his Lake country which is about forty miles off. It is uncertain whether I shall be equal to going. The charms of *sitting still* are great! Yet Thomas Spedding is a chief favourite of mine; I sit not still without regret. James S., it seems, is shooting partridges in Yorkshire, and shortly expected at his Brother's.

As to the Picturesque, I have been dreadfully annoyed with it ever since I left home. Not properly with *it*, for I rather like big rocks, high mountains, swift rivers, etc., as I suppose all mortal men since the beginning of the world have done; but the eternal cackle and babble about it, from all persons, even sensible persons, in these times, is truly distressing to me. It is like a human being uttering to me, "Cuck-*oo!* Cuck-*oo!*"

with a tongue that might speak real *words*. Far more shocking than you think!—This among other things attracts me rather to these bare solitudes: the grand meaning of *them* too is that God Eternal made them, that they are still solitary of all but the needful four-legged sheep!—

Well; I bid you enjoy the Green Island, I bid you pray daily you could cure what is ragged and awry in it, by *Repail* or otherwise;—and forget not to say when you are leaving it.

Yours in hope of meeting,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 141

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 9 Novr., 1843 (Thursday).

My dear good Mother—You will put up with a very small unsatisfactory Letter, instead of a long and pleasant one which I did mean to write you; I can do no more to-day, and alas that is little enough! But a word should verily, and shall verily go, to apprise you merely that we are all well, and ask if you are all well.

My little upper room* far out of the noise of pianos was finished near a fortnight ago, and this is the second week I have written in it. Alas, no "room" will serve my turn entirely at present! I cannot get *into* the subject at all; and I do but keep puddle-puddling, writing things and then burning them.—. . .

My little room here is such a curiosity as you have seldom seen; a place projecting off from my bedroom, about 7 or 8

* His dressing-room converted into a study.

feet square, papered on the walls, with a window in it which looks out upon the gardens, trees and houses at a distance,—and now with a fire-place, a shelf of books, my writing-table and a chair: here I sit, lifted above the noise of the world, *peremptory* to let no mortal enter upon my privacy here; and really I begin to like it. You never saw such a fireplace in your life; a little register grate let into the wall, as neat as a snuffbox, and really not much bigger than a porridge bowl; but it takes up its smoke like a little hero, and keeps the place as warm as a pie,—so warm that I oftenest sit with the door of it open, and communicate with the bedroom too. Could I but get my work to go forward! But at present it is like founding houses on bottomless quagmires; every stone when I have lugged it to the place is swallowed in unknown depths of *gludder*.* —Patience! Courage! . . . Dear Mother, will you let us know how you really are? I never dare believe that you are well. I also want to know so many other particulars! Tell me for one thing if you have got your rents paid you, if you have *mall in shaft stievely!* † Jane will send you "a word," many a word! Adieu dear good Mother. May God's blessing be ever on you all.

Your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 142

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 26 December, 1843.

Dear Jean—. . . This present Bank Draft here inclosed, James will observe is for £7. The two supernumerary sover-

* Mire.

† Firmly.

eigns you are to take directly to the poor Griers, the sick ones, John and the other, and smuggle them into their hands with the smallest possible quantity of noise, and leave them there. The poor creatures! One's heart is sore for them; but what help can be given? The mite shows a willing mind, and that is nearly all. Alas, what could this Life be if there were no Eternity behind it!—. . .

My unfortunate Book prospers as ill as ever Book did; in fact, the Book I have in view, on that subject, is beyond all others that ever were attempted by me, difficult to do;—perhaps impossible? No; I will not allow myself to say that: that shall not be said! However, about ten days ago, I gathered accurately together the fruit of six weeks' hard writing; and fairly burnt it all in the fire: there is an end of *it*. I am now trying the thing on another tack.* If one had not the obstinacy of a mule (among other gifts), there would be no getting on in Literature,—or elsewhere. I will do this thing yet, either well or ill; or get a terrible fall with it, if I live.—. . .

LETTER 143

To Edward FitzGerald.

Chelsea, 9 January, 1844.

Dear FitzGerald—Your Letter comes to me in a "good hour,"—makes for me what the French call a *bonheur!* I am

* At this point Carlyle decided to postpone the attempt to write a biography of Cromwell until he had first collected and edited, with the necessary elucidations, his letters and speeches. Before burning the papers spoken of above, he had picked out from his MSS., as worthy of preservation, the papers lately published as a volume, under the title of *Historical Sketches*, etc.

sunk in inexpressible confusions; and any kind voice of encouragement is right welcome. Surely if ever I do get this *Book on Cromwell* finished, we will smoke a pipe of triumph over it, and rejoice to remember difficulties undergone! Alas, for the present, I cannot so much as get it begun. In my whole life I have found myself in no such hideous situation: a ghastly labyrinth, created for me by the stupidities of England accumulating for two hundred years;—vacant Dulness glaring on one everywhere, with torpedo look, in this universal "dusk of the gods," saying with a sneer: "Thou? Wilt thou save a Hero from the Abysses, where dark Death has quietly hidden him so long?"—. . .

One of the things I have at length got to discern as doable is the gathering of all Oliver's Letters and Speeches, and stringing them together according to the order of time: a series of fixed *rock*-summits, in the infinite ocean of froth, confusion, lies and stupidity, which hitherto constitutes the "History" of Cromwell, as Dryasdust has printed it and read it. This I am at present doing;—tho' this is not what I have the real difficulty in doing. I have made considerable progress; time has eaten up most of Oliver's utterances; but a fraction still remains: these I can and will see printed, set in some kind of order.

Directly on receiving your Note I shot off a missive to "A. Cromwell Russell," etc.: no answer yet; you shall hear of it, if I ever get an answer but I hardly expect one, or at any rate one that will be better than none. Various are the applications of a like sort that I have made; always with the one answer, Nothing available here; something once *was*, or was said to be, but, etc., etc.—In the British Museum I find the *original* of the Letter about Naseby; written from Harborough

that very night of the Battle: I tried hard to find some shiver in the hair-strokes, some symptom that the man had been bearding Death all day; but there is nothing of that sort there; a quite composed Letter, the handwriting massive, steadfast, you would say almost firmer than usual.

I like that account of Laurence's about the Portrait,* and must see farther into it. Do you ever go to Lincolnshire? I wish you had some errand thitherward, to get me a right account of three places, Oliver's first scenes of real fight,—of setting life against life in that cause of his. Grantham, somewhere near that; then Gainsborough, where George Cavendish was killed in the bog; thirdly, Winceby Field some miles from Horncastle: these are the three. My stupid Topographers, etc., are silent, some of them *worse*. But I hope to know the real transactions yet; I must know them.—Did you ever hear of Sir Symonds d'Ewes of Stow Langtoft in Suffolk, a member of the Long Parliament, Historian, Antiquary and much else? There are ten volumes of written reports and Notes by him about the Long Parliament, which I accidentally discover, which Dryasdust has never once turned his dull eye upon! *Ex uno disce omnes.* A right Editor of d'Ewes might do an acceptable feat.

Adieu dear FitzGerald; Heaven love you.

Yours ever truly, and sorrowfully,

T. CARLYLE.

* Of Cromwell, by Cooper. E. F. G. [" E. F. G." are the initials of Edward FitzGerald.]

LETTER 144

To Edward FitzGerald.

Chelsea, 17 February, 1844.

Dear FitzGerald—There is unfortunately, if also fortunately, not the smallest haste in this Lincolnshire business; the Fates, I believe, have too clearly said that the child *Cromwell* cannot be born this year,—alas, they still say they know not in what year, or whether at all! As you remark, he is a devil of a *fœtus* to carry about with one!—

The rule of the matter, therefore, is: If you be at any rate going to Lincolnshire, go at your own time, and do this thing for me so as to amuse and instruct yourself with it; at least not so as to bore and burden yourself with it: any result you get out of it will be better than the round cipher I at present have; the smallest contribution shall be welcome. My notion is that all tradition of the thing is utterly gone,—far farther than you found it about Naseby: but I think perhaps the *whereabouts* of these transactions might still be discovered by an ingenious eye, and the picture such a one could give me of the ground would be decidedly worth something.

I have never yet been in Ireland with Oliver; and will not go, except cursorily, if I can help it. The Irish department of our Civil War requires to be done *in little* throughout; and Oliver's cutting off of the great fungus gangrenous horror that had grown together there, tho' one of his best pieces of Surgery, will not invite us to expatiate, I hope!—Besides I never *saw* a square inch of Ireland [except] with my mind's eye, and do not know it at all. Oliver's own Letters, I hope, which are very

copious in that season, will suffice.—Did you ever see Temple's History of the Irish Rebellion in '41,—Sir John Temple, Lord Palmerston's ancestor? It is a small contemporary quarto, of which certain pages are well worth preserving.

If your Brother can speak to the Duke of Manchester, certainly it will be worth doing. Prior to 1644, it is almost indubitable there must have many Letters gone between the Duke's ancestor and Oliver; they had even a controversy in a House of Commons Committee (of which Clarendon has left a story, that I have got some glimmering of light upon); but in the Spring of '44, in the time of the Self-denying Ordinance, they had an open public quarrel, and I suppose never corresponded more. The Committee Clarendon refers to treated (as I believe) of the Manor of "Somersham near St. Ives": your Brother might ask the Duke, Whether this property still belongs to his family, or is certainly known to have ever done so?—The Earl of Sandwich might also have many Letters; his ancestor was in a good deal of hard service at Oliver's right hand: to him I shall have good access by and by.

And now enough, enough! Get done with your influenza straightway, and come to London, to Chelsea, that we may see and hear you.

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 145

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea, 11 March, 1844.

Dear Jean— . . . I must send her [our Mother] an absurd engraving of myself, which somebody has published in an

absurd work here, called *Spirit of the Age,* or some such thing. It is not in the least like; uglier even than nature; and worth indeed nothing. The Picture it is done from is very ugly too, but very impressive, sad, really rather like. A certain young Quakeress at Falmouth sent us a pencil or crayon-sketch of that, a good while ago; which was always meant for you; but being only half successful, and dreadfully ugly, and of considerable size (being pasted on wood), it has never yet gone. We think of actually ridding our hands of it, by the Bookseller, about the end of the month. I have also got a *Don Quixote* for the goodman, which will go at the same time; a poor old copy, but one readable,—extremely well worth reading; for, as I say often, there are few more genial Books in this world. A laughter in it deeper than many a one's tears. *Chuzzlewit* also shall not be forgotten: what you say of him is the just judgement, poor Chuzzlewit; a really merry-hearted, musical, small chirping brother-man,—equal to the ninth-part of a hero, and precious in a time when even real fractional parts are rare! . . .

My Book is still a frightful concern; but I begin to feel that it must at last get under way. Jane has been poorly, and is better again; it was the cold weather mainly. She salutes you all.— . . .

LETTER 146

To Alexander Carlyle, Alton, New York State.

Chelsea, 3 May, 1844.

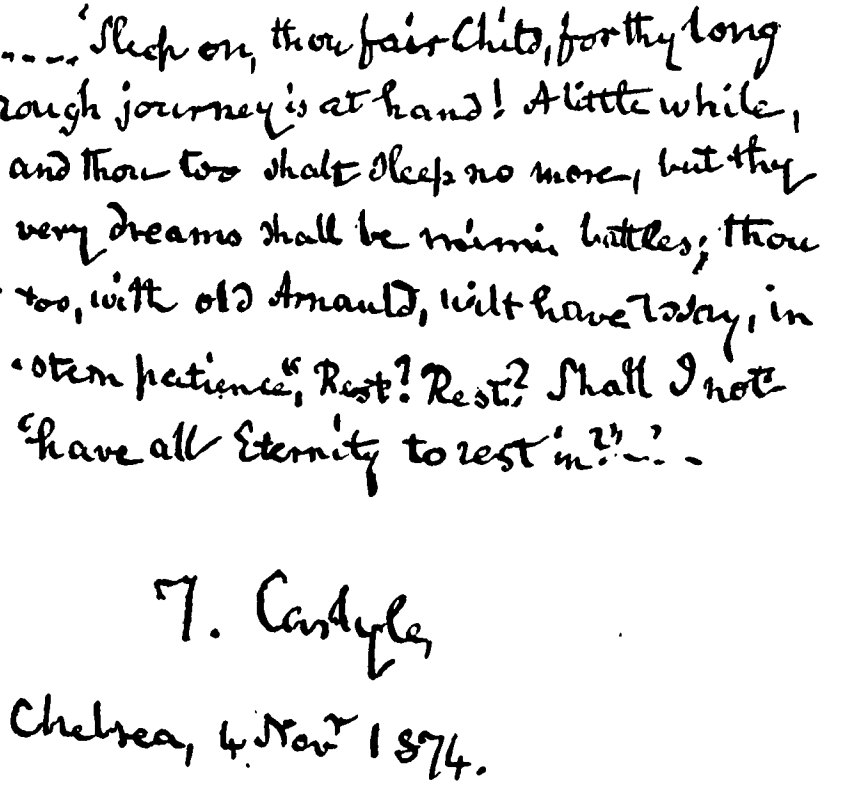
My dear Brother— . . . We duly got your Letter announcing that you were just about to move off for a trial of Canada. The news was most welcome to one and all of us.

We had got no favourable notion of those deep Western Countries; aguish, swampy, hot, far-distant regions, the scene of diseases, "Shinplaster Banks," uncertainties, sorrows and confusions! Better that you did not venture thither. Canada, too, you will no doubt find a place of difficulties, of drawbacks,—what place on this Earth is not such? But you are nearer hand in all senses; you are among people of your own blood and kin: you know much better what you are about there. On the whole if you can avoid getting an unhealthy place, I do not otherwise care much what place it is. If it be a favourable fertile place, you will have less extent of it for your money; if you get a large place, it must needs be that it is *un*favourable. On the whole we wish you to be settled "on a healthy place of your own"; that is all the length our wishes have light to go. A piece of God's Earth committed to your own free charge; it is a real blessing for a man that lives by tilling of the soil! Were it ugly as sin, every stroke of good labour you bestow on it, will make the place beautifuller;—what "beauty" is there in Fairyland itself compared with the aspect of order produced out of disorder by one's own faithful toil? That is the real beauty that will make a man feel some reconcilement to his ugly lot, however ugly it look. Next Letter, or some Letter soon, we hope to address you in some *hadding* of your own! It will be a little spot of light for us in that dim Continent. We will always think of our brave Alick struggling manfully along there; and bid with our whole hearts the Heavenly Powers be favourable to him. Courage; courage, my Brother: perhaps the worst of our days *are* over; and calmer and better days are coming!—

Nothing new has taken place here since you heard last.

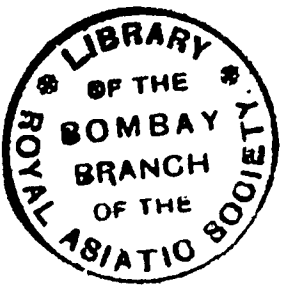
Our dear old Mother is still reported to be in her usual health; or rather I should say, is again so reported;—for she has had, I think, rather a sickly Winter of it, and has been a degree oftener ailing than was her wont: the warm Summer will now help her:—alas, we cannot have our brave old Mother always; it is the saddest thought I have in this world, the sternest to accustom myself to! Already I seem almost to have as good as lost her: it is but a few times, and then in sickliness, unnameable dispiritment, embarrassment, that I can hope to see her in this world. Why do I awaken these feelings in you? Surely you are farther gone from her than I! My dear Brother, we must look to a Higher than aught earthly for comfort in such matters. God is above us; surely there is no love in our hearts that He has not made,—our holiest affections, surely with them too, He will do what is wise, what is good and best!

. . . As for myself I make very bad progress, the work is so chaotic, unimaginably confused, and I am so bilious, irregular in sleep, etc.: however, I do get a little under way of late, and hope to struggle out the Book yet by and by. A piece of it is now fairly written,—thank Heaven: the first stone is more than half the building, when you have such quagmires to *found* in! All goes well with me otherwise: indeed nothing can go ill; I keep out of the way of all men and things, so far as possible, except this one thing; and feel that the whole world cannot much help me or much hinder me. Jane is growing stronger as the sun grows. She sends you all her affectionate wishes. When once you have a *place*, we must get up a Box and have it shipped for you with odd things; it will show that we are far *nearer* one another than you or we fancy; nearer than London and Edinburgh once were. . . . Remember


'Sleep on, thou fair Child, for thy long
'rough journey is at hand! A little while,
'and thou too shalt sleep no more, but thy
'very dreams shall be mimic battles; thou
'too, with old Arnauld, wilt have to say, in
'stern patience, Rest? Rest? Shall I not
'have all Eternity to rest in?'
T. Carlyle
Chelsea, 4 Nov 1874.

"SARTOR RESARTUS," BOOK II. CHAP. II.

FACSIMILE OF THOMAS CARLYLE'S WRITING A MONTH BEFORE HIS EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY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me also, in all affection to our Brother John* and his Peggy. It will be a comfort to us to hear that you are near one another. . . . God bless you, my dear Brother; may all good be ever with you. Your affectionate

T. CARLYLE

LETTER 147

To R. Browning, Hatcham, Surrey.

Chelsea, 21 May, 1844.

Dear Browning—This Mr. X——, Oliver's descendant, seems to be a kind of fool; and I find I shall have to attack him thro' you,—for your sins!

He called here the other day, at an hour when there is no admission; I wrote a small civil Note indicating that a copy of Oliver's Letter would greatly oblige me; that to see himself afterwards, if he found good to call again, any day after two o'clock, would give me, etc., etc. He answers after ten days by this enclosed Note; seems not to understand that the copy of Oliver's own Letter, not Henry's or the drawing of New Hall near Chelmsford,—is the only part of his possessions that interests me; and writes, in short, and in a very illegible hand too, considerably like a goose! I fear unless you take him in hand, I shall have a great deal of corresponding with him yet!—

He lives somewhere about Blackheath; he is known to some friends of yours: could not you, by your dexterity, contrive to introduce some legible penman, for ten minutes, into free contact with that invaluable Autograph, and get a correct copy of it;—we should then leave X—— to rhyme the matter in

* Their elder half-brother.

his own head, quite at his leisure, and to call here either during the summer or the winter as it seemed good to him! Do this, if you can, for me; and I will march X—— out of my memory straightway.—There is no haste, I ought to say; a copy any time within six months will serve all essential purposes. You can wait your time therefore; but when the time favours, let your Charity keep me in view.

For the rest why don't you come and see us here? You are found absent without leave. We are at home almost as good as every evening, and indeed every morning too; and your face is a pleasant phenomenon here.

Yours (with many apologies) ever truly,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 148

To the Rev. Alexr. Scott.

Chelsea, 30 May, 1844.

My dear Scott—It was a painful surprise to me the sad news I had the other week, of the opinion your Doctor had pronounced upon you. I was not aware that you were ill; I was looking for a sight of you soon, as one of the compensations in store for me;—and it turns out all otherwise for the present,—not as I had ordered it, but as Another has.

My first impulse was to inquire after your address; for the feeling in me was one that longed to utter itself in some kind of words. And yet alas there were, and there are, as good as no *words*. It is so little that one man can do for another. We can weep and grieve for one another; we can bid one another be

of courage, be of hope;—and that is, as it were, all!—The wretched state of my own spirits, and the deep confusions I am weltering in of late, have prevented me from doing even that.

My Wife was heartily gratified by the tone of your Letter, which she heard read at the Wedgwoods': it was brave, manful and calm, she said, as the words of a man could be. This is right; hold on by this, and quit it not. It is the anchor we have in these wild storms of Time and Chance,—a strength lent us by our Maker, and which, we may say, holds of Him. We are here in the Place of Hope always; and yet always we are to be prepared for Evil, since the Worst is, at all moments, near to every one of us.

Doctors are in no case infallible prophets to me; my Brother too says that your disease * is one they are apt enough to be mistaken in: we know nothing yet for certain, except even this, That the Eternal does rule in all things; that all shall be according to His will,—and that surely this shall be *well*. Well and best. Dear friend, what words can I say to you? There are no words, and I will say no more.——

My work for the last seven or eight months, has been in the highest degree dreary and disheartening, and hitherto, so far as appearance goes, seems altogether or almost altogether in vain. I find that the Spirit of Puritanism is not to be delineated to these ages,—except with an effort which borders nearer on the impossible than I have ever yet gone. . . .

And yet I feel sometimes as if this sorrowful and perhaps impossible enterprise were appointed to do me good. It is a

* Heart disease. The doctors proved to be mistaken, for Mr. Scott lived until January, 1866.

fruitful kind of study that of men who do in very deed understand and feel at all moments that they are in contact with God, that the right and wrong of their little life has extended itself into Eternity and Infinitude. Very clearly I perceive that this is the highest condition of man,—his only true condition for being a man. I stand astonished at the sober indubitable fact of it: how the thing that we hear, every day, like a mere sound, was to these men a fact! It is at bottom my religion too; I seem to understand that it will, in the essence of it, have to be all men's. There are "robes of light," as I say, encircling a man, without which the man is not luminous, but dark and unmanlike.—If I can gather this, and make it mine a little more conclusively, from my Puritans, my literary disappointment in the matter may be borne! Certainly it seems to me, this their practical contact with the Highest was a fact, which can be imitated, which should be emulated by all men. The latest fact of its kind, nearest to our own sunk days, and a fact forever memorable to us. In what of *Egoism* they had embarked on this faith I do not participate; in their hopes little, in their terrors not at all: that seems to me the new condition we are got into, or struggling to get into.

Dear Scott, I feel I do not weary you with these things. Thoughts of the like sort I do believe are daily in your own mind, and, in your sore struggling pilgrimage to spiritual manhood, have long been. If it please God, you shall yet be employed to make them clearer to yourself and others.—I will write no more to-night. I will bid you rest in Patience, rest in Hope, like a faithful man.

It would be cruel to trouble you when perhaps you are weak; but if at any good moment you felt disposed to write me a little

word of any kind, I should be glad of it. My blessings on your good Wife. May God's blessing be on you both always, and on us all. Good night.

Your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 149

To Edward FitzGerald.

Chelsea, 29 July, 1844.

Dear FitzGerald—I am very glad to hear of you again;—you from the green odoriferous Summerfields, I here amid the choking heat of Babylon and the baked bricks!

Alas, it seems to me I shall hardly get out into the country this year at all. I have succeeded so dreadfully ill with my working affairs, I feel as if my conscience would forbid me to enjoy any rural thing. . . . I really think I must try what sitting still will do for me this year. My one poor hope for the present, at least, is that the beautiful Quality will all go about their business in a week or two; and that then we shall have a quiet Town, where a poor wretch may be left alone to try if he *can* get any work done: he will at least be more solitary than anywhere else, and may meditate on the error of his ways, if he can do no better. I could envy you your beautiful excursions, beautiful to a healthy heart; but I will honestly wish you happiness in them, new health from them and many merry days. I do not envy anybody anything,—that really is true at present: I am as a *drowned mouse*, to whom additional rains or the brightest sunny weather are very literally all one! Such is the "Curse of Cromwell" resting on me, for the time being.

I never give up, but I make almost no way. . . . I am fast gathering Oliver's Letters together; have a big sheaf of them copied with my own hand, and tolerably elucidated: I find it very useful work; the Letters themselves stript of their ragged mis-spellings, etc., become quite lucid and even lucent. The ground grows always a little firmer as I work in that quarter.

Last week I took a violent resolution that the whole of Cromwell's Battles ought to be elucidated for the whole world: maps like the Winceby one, *exact* portraiture of the face of the ground as it now is, with judicious selection of the contemporary testimonies as they now are; *faithful* effort, in short, by a human being of the year 1844 to put down what he *can* know of those things two hundred years back, which will be memorable for a thousand years to come. Alas! I went to the Booksellers to give me an estimate of costs; the name of a fit Artist, first of all: this they will do;—but there I fear the matter will stick. Suppose *you* try your hand at Naseby, and another or two! *Woodcuts* not bigger than an octavo page,—the Ordinance Survey and utmost geographical correctness lying at the bottom of them. The *Portrait* of the Place in short.

A poor Scotchman coming to me near starved, I gave him a guinea to copy for me certain particulars of an Ipswich Election: this if I find means, I have some thoughts of printing as a Magazine Article somewhere.* You will find enough of it in the enclosed Paper;—if you can throw any light on it, you will.

Adieu dear F. Yours ever truly,

T. CARLYLE.

*This article, called "An Election to the Long Parliament," was published in *Fraser's Magazine*, No. 178.—See Carlyle's *Miscellaneous Essays*.

LETTER 150

To Thomas Ballantyne, Manchester.

Chelsea, 8th Augt., 1844.

My dear Sir—. . . I rejoice heartily in the project you have in view, and hope to-day's meeting will be prosperous and productive. On the subject of Parks and Public Places of innocent Recreation in large Towns I have indeed nothing more to say at present than what I have already said: but I think often enough of it; and trust those whose hands are within reach of such a business will everywhere, the noble part of them, begin doing in it, without more saying than is needful. Among the thousand things which the Working People of large towns do, in the Supreme Court of All, mutely but imperatively demand of their richer Fellow-Citizens, this of open green spaces to breathe in for a half hour now and then, seems to me the most accomplishable, and by no means the least needful. It could be done, this thing; there are nine hundred and ninety-nine other things that cannot just at present be done. Begin with this thing! This well done, the next thing will have become doabler. I do sincerely hope you will get on with it,—for the sake of the poor little sickly children, and the dusty toilsome men, to whom, for a thousand years, generation after generation, it may be a blessing!—

You are right, I think, to try for Four Parks if you can have a chance. It were good also if in any Building Acts, or such like, you could silently introduce facilities for having enlargements added to your Parks. In the climate of Manchester too

there certainly ought to be roofed spaces,—large rooms, kept under mild but strict order, into which the poorest man that would behave himself like a man, might have means of procuring access. Good Heavens, what benefit might be accomplished would brave men with hearts and heads but bestir themselves a very little! . . .

Yours always truly,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 151

To the Rev. John Sterling, Ventnor, Isle of Wight.

Chelsea, 27 August, 1844.

My Friend—To-day another little note from you makes the hearts start within us. On Sunday morning gone a fortnight there came another;* which will dwell in my memory, I think, while I have any memory left. Ever since, it mingles with every thought, or is itself my thought; neither do I wish to exclude it, if I could. To me there is a tone in it as of sphere-music, of the Eternal Melodies which we know well to be sacred; —sadder than tears, and yet withal more beautiful than any joy. My Friend, my brave Sterling! A right valiant man; very beautiful, very dear to me; whose like I shall not see again in this world!—

We are journeying towards the Grand Silence; what lies beyond it earthly man has never known, nor will know: but all brave men have known that it was Godlike, that it was right GOOD,—that the name of it was GOD. *Wir heissen euch*

* The letter of August 10th, printed by Carlyle in his *Life of John Sterling*, Part iii., Chap. vi.

hoffen. What is right and best for us will full surely be. Tho' He slay me yet will I trust in Him. "ETERNO AMORE"; that *is* the ultimate significance of this wild clashing whirlwind which is named Life, where the sons of Adam flicker painfully for an hour.

My Wife is all in tears: no tear of mine, dear Sterling, shall, if I can help it, deface a scene so sacred. The memory of the Brother that is gone like a brave one, shall be divine to us; and, if it please the Supreme Wisdom, we shall—O my Friend, my Friend!

In some moods it strikes me, with a reproachful emphasis, that there would be a kind of satisfaction for me could I see you with these eyes yet again. But you are in great suffering; perhaps I should be but a disturbance? There is a natural longing that way; but perhaps it is a false pusillanimous one: I have, at bottom, no speech for you which could be so eloquent as my silence is. And yet I could be silent there too; silent and quiet. I shall let Anthony [Sterling] decide it between us, to whom I write to-day.*

Adieu, my brave and dear one.

Yours evermore,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 152

To His Mother, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea, 15 October, 1844.

My dear Mother—Here is a Letter just arrived which will be very welcome to you; I send it off without a moment's delay, after we have both read it. Our good Alick seems to be

* John Sterling died 18th September, 1844.

well, with all his Household; digging his Potatoes, on the other side of the Ocean, and sowing his winter corn, as we are doing on our side. Let us be very thankful that we get such good news from him.

I did not know, till I saw in this Letter, that you had sent him £10 out of your poor Purse,—my dear generous Mother! I suppose it would do yourself good withal; and so we must not complain of it; we ought rather to rejoice at it: "a cheerful giver" is *loved* in High quarters; and a generous Mother's heart is beautiful to see, whether it give away pounds or kingdoms!—

Jack had a very hasty Letter from me on Saturday afternoon: I have gone thro' nothing new since that;—busy always at the old labour; the mere mechanical part of which is well forward in this quarter of it. If ever I get these Letters of Cromwell printed, you will be delighted to read them: a man who in all his ways acknowledges the Great Creator and Sender of him; looking to do His will here on Earth as the first and last of all objects. It is beautiful to see,—tho' the like is all but totally forgotten now among all kinds of men. I seem to myself as if working towards a good object, in trying to make such a man memorable and credible once more among my fellow-creatures.— . . .

LETTER 153

To Edward FitzGerald.

Chelsea, 26 Octr., 1844.

Dear FitzGerald—I have sent your name to the Library: so soon as any Committee-meeting is, your business will be completed, and Cochrane, the Librarian, will announce [the] fact to

you, and demand money. You will find it a very great convenience, I do expect, to be admitted freely to such an extent of Book-pasturage. In regard to all but the ephemeral rubbish, which are in great demand, and which you can well dispense with, the access to Books (I believe) is very fair; certainly there are many good Books in the collection: bad rubbish Books too you can get, French Novels, etc., etc., in very great abundance; but you must be on the spot,—nay I believe you must even be a lady,—for that. Do not therefore attempt that!—

You may depend upon it Dryasdust* is highly gratified with the notice taken of him. Pray sound him, from the distance, and ascertain: I have still a great many Suffolk questions that I could ask him.—I am getting [on] a little better with my poor *Cromwell* in these days; I really must have done with it, if only to save my own life. It is still very frightful,—a dark Golgotha as wide as the World; but here and there it does begin to get luminous, to get alive. Courage! I think it will be the joyfullest feat for me I ever did, when the last tatter of it is fairly shaken off my fingers, and I am free again.

One day we had Alfred Tennyson here; an unforgettable day. He staid with us till late; forgot his stick: we dismissed him with *Macpherson's Farewell.* Macpherson (see Burns) was a High-

* "Dryasdust" was D. E. Davy, Esq., of Ufford, a polite, handsome old Gentleman, who had collected over eighty folios of Suffolk History, which he finally bequeathed to the British Museum. He supplied Carlyle (at my request) with all the particulars he wanted about an Election of County Members at Ipswich, 1640, and was thanked in print under the name "Dryasdust."—Ed. FitzGerald.—Carlyle afterwards retracted the epithet Dryasdust, and wrote as follows (24th Feb., 1845) to Mr. FitzGerald: "Your Letters both came; Anderson's, and the good Mr. Davy's,—whom I will never call Dryasdust more! He is a man of real knowledge in his own innocent department, and has a most courteous disposition. Pray thank him very kindly in my name."

land robber; he played that Tune, of his own composition, on his way to the gallows; asked, "If in all that crowd the Macpherson had any clansman?" holding up the fiddle that he might bequeath it to some one. "Any kinsman, any soul that wished him well?" Nothing answered, nothing durst answer. He crashed the fiddle under his foot, and sprang off. The Tune is rough as hemp, but strong as a lion. I never hear it but with something of emotion,—poor Macpherson; tho' the Artist hates to play it. Alfred's dark face grew darker, and I saw his lip slightly quivering!*

He said of you that you were a man from whom one could accept money; which was a proud saying; which you ought to bless Heaven for. It has struck me as a distinctly necessary Act of Legislation, that Alfred should have a Pension of £150 a year. They have £1,200 every year to give away. A hundred and fifty to Alfred, I say; *he* is worth that sum to England! It should be done and must.

Yours ever truly,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 154

To His Mother, The Gill, Annan.

Chelsea, 5 December, 1844.

My dear Mother—. . . Yesterday which was my birthday, I meant to have written to you: I said to myself, "It is the least thou canst do on *her* behalf for bringing thee into the world!" I right fully purposed and meant: but just at the time intended for that pious object, an impertinent visitor was

* This paragraph is printed in *Letters and Literary Remains of E. FitzGerald*, i, 144.

pleased to drop in, and my hands were tied! I reflected that you could not have *got* the Letter any sooner at anyrate; and so, decided to write to-day.

Dear Mother, many thoughts, sure enough were in my head all yesterday! This time Nine-and-forty years, I was a small infant few hours old, lying unconscious in your kind bosom; you piously rejoicing over me,—appointed to love me while life lasted to us both. What a time to look back, thro' so many days, marked all with faithful labour by you, with joy and sorrow! I too could weep over them: but we will not weep, dear Mother;—surely we may say withal as the Old Hebrew devoutly did, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us!" Yes; for all our sorrows and difficulties, we have not been without help;—neither shall we be. Your poor "long sprawl of an ill-put-together thing," as you once defined me, has grown up to be a distinct somewhat in this world; and his good Mother's toil and travail with him was not entirely in vain. Much is come and gone; and we are still left here:—and ought not our true effort, and endeavour more than ever, for the days that yet remain, to be even this, That we may serve the Eternal Maker of us; struggle to serve Him faithfully, Him and not the Enemies of Him! Even so.—My ever-loved Mother, I salute you with my affection once more, and thank you for bringing me into this world, and for all your unwearied care over me there. May God reward you for it,—as assuredly He will and does: I never can reward you!—

Alas, here comes in another Visitor; who falls to my lot, Jane being out: so I have to break off abruptly while my tale is but half told! I will write again before long.— . . .

LETTER 155

To Edward FitzGerald.

Chelsea, 8 Feby., 1845.

Dear FitzGerald—I have expressly named you and the Lady Olivia* to his Grace, as the benevolent persons who, under Providence and him, are *to get me a copy* of that Paper or Letter of Oliver's, without further travel or trouble of mine! My own visit to Kimbolton, thankfully acknowledged, and not refused forever, is postponed into the vague distance,—to the rear of this publication of *Oliver's Letters*, at least. So pray bestir yourself, and think what can be done! For the thing will be soon wanted. I have, this morning, after infinite higgling to and fro, definitely settled that the *Letters and Speeches* are actually to be proceeded with as a separate Book straightway. The *Life* must follow when it can. The *Letters* themselves, I compute, will prove readable to serious rational men; and may tend to clear away much sordid rubbish out of my road, especially to put the controversy about Oliver's "character," "hypocrisy," etc., etc., asleep forever and a day.—So look to the Gainsborough business, look to the Kimbolton business; and help me what you can!—

If the Lady Olivia is resident at Kimbolton, and if you were within four miles of her with your friend there, it would not be difficult to get your eye upon the Paper itself perhaps, and get me the copy of it, the instant the key of the repository

* Lady Olivia Sparrow, aunt, I think, to the then Duke of Manchester.—Ed. FitzGerald.

were turned, This latter, I suppose, cannot happen till His Grace in person arrive? We must be patient; that date, "a month hence," will still do for me.

I am so weakly, sleepless and unwell at present, I begin thinking of a horse again. For I am to be very busy. . . .

Yours ever truly,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 156

To Alexander Carlyle, Brantford, Canada

Chelsea, 17 June, 1845.

My dear Brother—. . . I have got a horse according to your advice! Often I thought of you, when this business was on hand: I had no Alick to buy a horse for me now! A benevolent friend of these parts undertook it for me:—a very smart horse, a gelding of six years, black, long-tailed, high and thin,—swift as a roe; reminds me of poor *Larry* in some of his ways, tho' better bred than Larry: the price of him was £35; would be very dear in Dumfries.* I ride two hours every day; and really hope to get benefit by and by, tho' the effect hitherto is rather an *increase* of biliousness; which I am told is common in such cases. I really have been kept terribly busy and much harassed all Spring and Summer; I long very sincerely indeed to be thro' this affair, and out into the Country again!

But alas we are still a good way from that. The first volume is fairly done and printed: but we have hardly the fifth part of the Second ended yet. I think it may be three months al-

* This horse was at first called "Black Duncan," afterwards, "Bobus." Carlyle sold it next year to a relation of his in Dumfriesshire.

most before I am fairly off. However, the Book does prove a little better than I expected; and will perhaps be of some use by and by; which is a kind of consolation. Did you get a fraction of a leaf of it, with some little Note of mine? I think I sent you such a thing. . . .

Your affectionate Brother,

T. CARLYLE.

Jane sends her affectionate regards to you and all of you. When *little* Jane takes the pen in hand, I do not see why she should not write a line to her Namesake here.—

END OF VOLUME I.

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